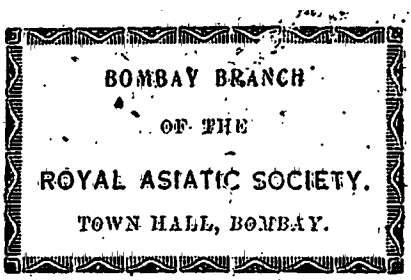

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King Henry VIII.

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MEMOIRS

OF

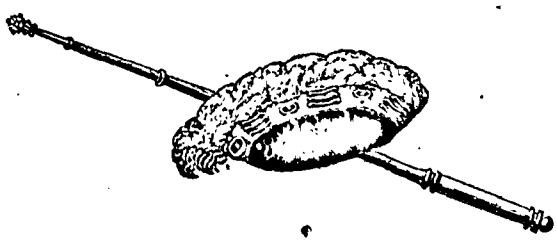
THE COURT

OF

HENRY THE EIGHTH.

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By Mrs. A. T. THOMSON.



VOL. I.

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LONDON:
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TO

HENRY REVELL REYNOLDS, Esq.

AS A TRIBUTE OF ESTEEM

FOR

THE EXCELLENT QUALITIES OF HIS HEART,

AND

OF RESPECT FOR HIS TALENTS,

THIS WORK IS INSCRIBED,

BY

HIS SINCERE FRIEND,

THE AUTHOR.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

WERE Historical Memoirs of particular reigns an unprecedented species of writing in this country, the author of this work would consider, that some explanation of the distinction between them and History, properly so called, might be necessary; but, as this is not the case, she has only diffidently to hope, that, in presenting it to the Public, it will meet with some share of indulgence. She has endeavoured to bring within the limits of her book every circumstance of interest which characterized the important period of which it treats; and, avoiding every party feeling either with respect to religion or politics, she has attempted to display a fair and correct picture of the Reformation and its origin.

While the author is aware, that a Memoir should embrace particulars and a detail of

occurrences which are totally incompatible with the dignity of History, she is also sensible that it would be both tedious, and unnecessary, to present that minute view of transactions which is consonant with the labours of the Chronicler; and she trusts, that in taking a middle course, her work will be found to convey information and entertainment to the general reader, unincumbered with prolixity. Such as it is, she commits it, not without feelings of anxiety for its fate, to the Public; at whose tribunal she is, however, confident, no judgment is finally pronounced which is unmerited.

Much additional information respecting many points upon which this Memoir treats, may doubtless, however, yet be obtained; and the author, amid thankfulness for many sources of investigation which have been opened to her, has to regret that the valuable discoveries at the State Paper Office, are yet to be disclosed to the Public.

91, *Sloane Street,*
May 3d, 1826.

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MEMOIRS

OF

THE COURT OF

HENRY THE EIGHTH.

CHAP. I.

Accession of Henry the Eighth. — His Education. — Margaret, Countess of Richmond. — Members of the Council. — The Principle on which they were chosen. — Funeral of Henry the Seventh. — Proceedings of Parliament. — Empson and Dudley. — Marriage and Coronation of the King and Queen.

HENRY THE EIGHTH, second son of Henry the Seventh, by his consort Elizabeth of York, commonly called, from her excellent character, good Queen Elizabeth*, became heir to the Crown of England, in consequence of the death of Arthur, Prince of Wales, his elder brother, and ascended the throne on the decease of his father.† That politic and wary monarch had designed him, according to some historians, for

* *Holinshed*, p. 530.

† Henry the Seventh had, by his wife Elizabeth of York, eight children, four sons and four daughters; three only of these survived him: Henry the Eighth, Margaret, Queen of Scotland, and Mary, afterwards Queen of France. *Holinshed*, p. 541.

the archbishopric of Canterbury; and it has been supposed, that this project was dictated by important considerations, calculated to influence a mind so peculiarly characterized by caution and foresight, as that of Henry the Seventh.

A desire to avoid encumbering the nation with an expensive provision for a younger son; the hope of contributing essentially to the interests of the reigning family, by securing the primacy to one of its nearest connections, and even a remote expectation that the dignity of Cardinal might, one day, be added to that exalted station, are conjectured to have influenced this sagacious king in the education of his second son.

In support of these surmises, it has been remarked, that the instructions bestowed upon Prince Henry by his preceptor, Skelton, were calculated to render him a scholar and a churchman, rather than an enlightened legislator. He was tutored in the philosophy of the schools, especially the Aristoteleian, then the most in credit with the learned; he was skilled in the Latin * and French languages, which he spoke with fluency; and usually wrote his familiar letters in the French tongue; and in music his knowledge was said to be considerable. To

* He wrote, in 1508, a Latin letter to Erasmus, which that great scholar preserved in a box, and displayed with pride, as a favourable specimen of classical composition. See *Jortin's Life of Erasmus*, Ep. 451. See Appendix.

these accomplishments, Henry added a taste for poetry; for a ballad is still extant, which, from the testimony of one of his household, the father of Sir John Harrington, is admitted as a genuine effusion of his muse; and, from the poverty of its numbers, and the eccentricity of its rhymes, we are led to infer that it would not have remained extant, had it not been of royal origin.* To theological studies, Henry devoted his attention in early life with ardour, and with success; at least, this part of his attainments is not to be despised, since it enabled him in after times to procure for himself and his successors the title of Defender of the Faith. The good effect of these pursuits on the character of the future sovereign may be questioned. Divinity, as it was at that period taught in the schools, tended little to enlarge the views, or to give soundness to the opinions of its students; and thence, probably, the violent prejudices of Henry, his conceit, the intemperance of his polemical discussions, his vacillations on important points, and his obstinacy in those of less moment. His acquirements, however we may view them, were uncommon, in an age when it was thought sufficient for a young nobleman "to wind a horn, to carry his hawk fair, and to

* See *Walpole's Royal and Noble Authors.* Art. Hen. VIII.

leave study and learning to the children of mean people;"[2] and the bias of his education may seem to have implied a destination for the convocation, or the cloister, rather than for the council or the field. But it is more than probable, that no such intentions as have been inferred on the part of his father, subsisted. Henry the Seventh, illiterate himself, prized learning, which his mother, the Countess of Richmond, the foundress of two Colleges, had set him an example of encouraging; and he was, besides, desirous of diverting the attention of his sons from inquiries into the nature of a succession in which they had the manifest superiority over their father. The facts, too, that Prince Arthur* shared a similar course of instruction with his brother; and that his death, when Henry was only eleven years of age, caused no alteration in the studies of the heir-apparent, appear to decide that these pursuits resulted merely from the inclination of their father. Henry the Seventh, although not like his son, deserving the appellation of Beauclerc †, had the same touches of polemical mania, which afterwards,

* Giles Dewes, Clerk of the Library to Henry the Seventh and the Eighth, instructed Prince Arthur and the Lady Mary in the French tongue, (*Weaver's Funeral Monuments*, p. 398.) and might, therefore, possibly have had some share also in the tuition of Prince Henry.

* See *Burnet's Hist. Ref.* vol. i. p. 18.

sometimes creditably, sometimes disgracefully, distinguished his successor.*

Margaret, Countess of Richmond, to whom the guardianship of the young king was committed by Henry the Seventh, was a lady of reputed learning, and of noted piety; and not likely to discourage her grandson, over whose mind she possessed considerable controul, from studious habits and theological inquiries. The foundress of St. John's and of Christ's Colleges at Cambridge, and a liberal patroness of literature, this venerable lady was regarded, at the court of her son, as the model of propriety and of virtue; and in an age of superstition she advanced her fame for piety, by declaring, "that if the princes of Christendom would unite in a crusade against the Turks, she would willingly attend as a laundress in the camp." Her forbearance, and self-denial, as well as her devotion, have been extolled, for a vow of celibacy which she imposed upon herself, though

* Henry the Seventh, by the weight either of his authority or of his argument, once confuted a Lollard in public disputation at Cambridge; and he took so much interest in mathematics, that one Hodgkin, vicar of Ringwood, in Essex, remarkable for his skill in that science, received frequent visits from him on that account. *Weaver's Funeral Monuments.*

not until after the death of her third husband. * The respectful observance which her son, Henry the Seventh, paid her, is evinced by the privilege which he allowed her, of occasionally signing herself as queen. † To so grave and dignified a personage, was the superintendance of the young king assigned, upon the decease of his father.

With the approbation of the Countess of Richmond, the counsellors and servants of the late monarch were retained in the confidence and about the person of his successor. It is a matter of some curiosity to inquire into the merits and characters of those who presided over the commencement of so remarkable a reign as that of Henry the Eighth. In selecting

* Fisher, Bishop of Rochester, preached her funeral sermon, in which he compared her to Martha, for nobility of person, chastity, love of God, &c. He summed up by enumerating her relationship to thirty kings and queens, within the four degrees of marriage, besides dukes, marquisses, earls, and other nobles. In addition to her other accomplishments, the venerable countess was the translatress of some devotional works from the French (See *Walpole's Royal and Noble Authors*); and so expert a needlewoman, that a piece of tapestry was long preserved, as her production, at Bletsko, in Bedfordshire, where she was born; and was constantly called for by King James the First when on his progresses. The countess published, also, orders for precedence, by which she regulated the dresses, and defined the etiquettes to be observed by ladies of rank. *Fuller's Church Hist.* p. 94. The venerable Margaret was also a justice of the peace. *Warton's Hist. Poet.* vol. i. p. 200.

† *Ellis's Letters on English History*, vol. i. p. 49.

his ministers and agents, it was the policy of Henry the Seventh to prefer lawyers, and churchmen; because he could reward them with ease, and with little expence. It was his custom, also, to bestow marks of favour upon families of recent elevation in society, by which means he repressed the ascendancy of the ancient nobles, encouraged talent, and obtained a more complete sway over the minds of those whom he employed, than he could have exercised over the heads of proud and powerful families. Upon these principles some of the most eminent of the privy counsellors were chosen. Thomas Howard, Earl of Surrey, the Lord Treasurer, of an ancient family, it is true, had yet been attached to the unfortunate house of York, and had been recently reconciled to the victorious party. At the battle of Bosworth, where his father, the Duke of Norfolk had fallen, fighting for Richard the Third, Surrey had been one of the bravest combatants on the same side; and, after defending himself to the last, was obliged to surrender his sword; when, being reproached by the victor, Henry the Seventh, for taking up arms in favour of an usurper, he made this magnanimous reply: "Sir, he was my crowned king: let the authority of parliament place the crown on that stake, and I will fight for it; so would I have fought for you, had the same

authority placed the crown on your head." This brave man was, notwithstanding, attainted and imprisoned in the tower. When Henry was called, by Lincoln's rebellion, to the north, Surrey was offered his liberty by the lieutenant of the tower, but, retaining the same principle of fidelity to the reigning monarch, which actuated his former conduct, he rejected the proposal, and replied: "If the king be alive, show me where his grace is, that I may do him service." This honourable and politic behaviour obtained, at length, the confidence of the distrustful Henry; and Surrey became, afterwards, one of his most favoured, and most faithful servants.*

Richard Fox, Bishop of Winchester, was another confidential agent of Henry the Seventh; and by his assistance, much of the immense treasure which now enriched the exchequer, had been collected. This sum amounting to 1,800,000*l.*, the bishop lived to see dissipated in three years. Of a less compliant disposition, the counsels of Fox, more prudent than those of Surrey, soon ceased to be equally acceptable to the young king, who quickly evinced an inclination to dissipate that wealth which had been accumulated by the indefatigable avarice of his father.

* See *Nott's Life of Surrey.*

William Warham, Archbishop of Canterbury, and Chancellor, a man of a cautious temper, and well versed in the laws, was another prominent character in the council, where he still, in conformity with the wishes of the late king, retained his place. This prelate, who rose from a vicarage to the primacy *, was a man of learning, and of moral worth, though somewhat addicted to persecution. Erasmus has eulogized his merits in a dedication prefixed to an edition of Saint Jerome, which that scholar has addressed to him; and his virtues have been affectionately recorded by Sir Thomas More, in his preliminary discourse to the Utopia.

Thoms Ruthall, Doctor of Laws, and Bishop of Durham, was a man in whose judgment Henry the Eighth afterwards found reason to repose considerable reliance, and whom he frequently consulted on business of state, and employed in foreign embassies of importance. The following anecdote is related of this prelate. Some years after the accession of the young king, he employed Ruthall to draw up a statement of the general condition of his kingdom. Ruthall, having finished his treatise, caused it to be richly bound in vellum, and adorned in a costly manner: at the same time, he had written

* Warham, as it appears from an inscription in the church of Barly, in Hertfordshire, was vicar of that place. *Weaver's Funeral Monuments.*

an account of his private affairs, which was contained in a cover similar to that of the work which he intended to present to the king. This, unfortunately, he put by mistake into the hands of Wolsey, who was deputed by the king to receive the treatise: Wolsey, discovering the mistake, and perceiving by the statement that the bishop was very rich, congratulated Henry upon the disclosure of wealth upon which he might seize in emergency. The bishop, knowing the rapacity of those with whom he had to deal, experienced so much vexation at this accident, that he is said to have died of a fever, occasioned by chagrin.*

The rest of the council consisted chiefly of military men: — George Talbot, Earl of Shrewsbury, Lord Steward of the Household to Henry the Seventh, retained his place: also, Sir Edward Poynings, Comptroller of the Household, whose name is still celebrated in Ireland for a statute which had been enacted in the preceding reign.† Sir Charles Somerset, commonly stiled, in right

* *Biographia Britannica*, vol. v. p. 425. — The reader cannot fail to remember the singular and ill-judged manner in which Shakspeare introduces this incident in his play of Henry the Eighth: in which the politic and wary cardinal is said to have committed this gross mistake.

† Poynings procured an act in the Irish parliament, decreeing that "all former acts of the English parliament should be binding in Ireland; and, secondly, that before any Irish parliament should be holden, copies of the acts proposed to be passed should be sent over to England, for the approbation of the king and council."

of his wife, Lord Herbert of Gower, the ancestor of the present Dukes of Beaufort, was natural son to the Duke of Somerset, and was called to parliament by the title of his wife: Sir Edward Marney, afterwards Lord Marney, and Sir Thomas Darcy, afterwards Lord Darcy; these two counsellors owed much of their elevation to royal favour, especially Marney, who, having been an early and favourite companion of the young king, was introduced into the council at his request. The origin of Marney was obscure, and we find him and Darcy afterwards designated by Henry as "mean and scarce born gentlemen, of no great lands, until promoted by us, and so made knights."* The descent of Darcy did not merit to be thus stigmatized. The name of Darcy was ancient and honourable, although the estates had reverted to another branch of the family. These circumstances were not, however, unfavourable at the court either of Henry or his father; they afforded an opportunity of conferring favours, which might secure the allegiance of the poor, but deserving aspirant for fame. To Marney, therefore, was given the chancellorship of the Duchy of Lancaster, and Darcy, who afterwards fell under the displeasure of his sovereign, was made chief justice in eyre of the forests beyond the Trent.† To these

* *Fuller's Church Hist.* p. 224. † Ibid. p. 225.

were joined Sir Thomas Noel, Master of the Wards, and Sir Thomas Wiatt, more famed as the father of the poet, than for his own merits: yet the qualities of prudence and probity, which he displayed, cannot be too much estimated in a public station, and have this felicity attending them, which brilliant talents cannot command,—that they can be possessed unenvied, and in security.

Such were the persons who composed the council of the young king, into whose hands the reins of government were consigned, when he had only completed his eighteenth year. The Countess of Richmond selected these experienced advisers from among those in whom the deceased King had chiefly confided; and bestowed upon them their several offices, not from private regard, nor court favour; not because they had flattered female vanity or gratified avarice, but because they were men possessed of intellectual strength and of moral honesty; whose wisdom might guide, and whose fidelity would protect their prince. "Thus," says Lord Herbert of Cherbury, "without divulging any secret, or descending from the dignity of their place, to require advice from their inferiors, they moved in their own orb." *

July 22, 1509.

The exclusion of lawyers from the privy

* *Lord Herbert*, p. 8.

council of Henry the Eighth is remarkable, and arose, it is probable, from the unpopularity of many of the agents of his father, who were of the legal profession. The principle which composed this council, developed itself plainly in the conduct of the young king, when his public character became decided; and it was found during the course of his reign that he adhered "less to reason of law, than to reason of state."*

The young king was recommended to retire to Richmond during the performance of the obsequies of his father, in order to avoid the acclamations of the people: for it was thought, that their joy might be expressed with some indecorum on the appearance of a generous and affable prince, whose disposition seemed to present every thing that was opposite to the hard and oppressive character of their late ruler. It was designed to conduct the funeral with great solemnity and magnificence, and to deposit the body in the superb chapel at Westminster, on which Henry the Seventh, notwithstanding his love of accumulating money, had expended, according to some accounts, 14,000*l.*, and to others, 20,000*l.*; a very considerable sum in those days. The skill of foreign artists was employed in this master-piece of architecture, which was

* *Herbert.*

intended to serve as a sepulchre for the late king and his successors. Torrigiano, a Florentine of some note, is said to have erected the tomb, which excites the envy and admiration of modern architects, and reconciles us in some measure to the superstition, not unmingled with worldly vanity, which caused its erection.

The body of the deceased king was conveyed from Richmond to Saint George's Fields, where it was met by many of the clergy, who accompanied it to London Bridge. Thence it was attended by the mayor and aldermen, in suits of deep mourning, to St. Paul's; where, after a solemn mass and dirge had been performed, and a sermon preached by the Bishop of Rochester, it was deposited for that night. On the ensuing day, it was placed under a sumptuous hearse, or canopy; an image of the defunct placed on the corpse, apparelled in robes of state, with a ball and sceptre in the hands; and in this array the funeral proceeded to Westminster, where lights were placed on the hearse, which, moving along the obscure aisles of the Abbey, must have produced great solemnity. The image being laid on a cushion, covered with a pall of gold, and the hearse placed within a double railing, the chief mourners took their places within the first rail, while the knights, bearing banners of state, and the officers of state,

stood without. Garter, king of arms, then made this anouncement; "For the soul of Henry the Seventh, late king of this realm;" on which was sung a funeral dirge, and the mourners departed into the palace of Westminster. On the next day the body was laid in the tomb, and three masses were performed; at the last of which were offered the sword, the target, and the helmet of the deceased monarch; and the lords treasurer, the steward, and the chamberlain, broke their staves and cast them into the grave. After these ceremonies, Garter, with a loud voice proclaimed the young king, and the company returned to the palace, and enjoyed the refreshment of a sumptuous banquet.*

On the 25th of April the parliament was convened, when a confirmation was given to the pardon, published by the late king a short time before his decease, for all offences except treason, felony and murder, and in the same proclamation an order was issued for all beggars and vagabonds to depart from London to the places where they were born; but a still more popular resolution was manifested, not only to discontinue the commission for forfeitures, established in the preceding reign, but to visit, with severe retribution, the iniquitous agents in those transactions.

* *Hall*, p. 507.

Covetousness, a vice which increases in proportion to its gratification, having annihilated, in the bosom of Henry the Seventh, all principles of justice, he had resorted to other means of adding to his treasures, besides the subsidies which were voted to him by parliament. As he was fully aware of the proneness of his people to offend against the penal statutes, he caused an inquisition to be made into the private conduct of individuals; and the result of this investigation proved that few, of any rank or class of persons, were exempt from the charge of having infringed on one or other of the laws. At first, those who were convicted, escaped with fines; but the appetite for extortion increasing as his plans succeeded, Henry the Seventh had established a commission of forfeitures, of which he made Richard Empson, and Edmund Dudley, the surveyors. These men, assisted by promoters, or informers, executed their authority with the utmost rigour; and indifferent to the danger of exasperating the people, or to the ignominy of their own characters, exercised the most oppressive injustice.

The hour of punishment, however, arrived. On the very day of the king's death, according to one account, Empson and Dudley were committed to the tower, and were soon afterwards, charged with their offences before the

privy council. Empson made an ingenious defence *, by which some members of the council were conciliated; but the majority, considering that the conduct of these men and of the late king proceeded rather from avarice, than from zeal for the preservation of order, and having, in various instances, experienced the effects of their scrutiny, pronounced them guilty; yet, as they could not be convicted by the letter of the law, and as it was decorous to avoid any appearance of dishonour to the memory of the late king, they were condemned upon a false accusation of intending to withhold their allegiance from the reigning monarch. From some scruples in the minds of the judges, their execution was deferred until the ensuing year †: but immediate restitutions were made, by command of the young king, of large sums, to various persons who had suffered injury from these oppressors; and laws were enacted, Aug. 17. 1509.

* Dudley wrote a book during his imprisonment, with a hope of conciliating the King, but it never met the eyes of him for whom it was intended. This work, entitled the "Tree of the Commonwealth," was discovered by Stow, and transcribed and presented to the Earl of Warwick, the descendant of Dudley. The original was afterwards purchased by the Earl of Oxford. *Biographia Britannica*, vol. v. p. 425.

† It was supposed that Queen Katharine had interfered in their behalf. See *Stowe's Annals*, p. 487.

in order to protect the subject from similar injustice. The informers did not escape just punishment; but, to the great joy of the people, were branded, and set in the pillory.*

The day on which justice was gratified with the committal of these two men to the Tower, was sullied by the hasty and unmerited imprisonment of Lord Henry Stafford, brother of the Duke of Buckingham; on account, it is supposed, of some suspicions, which were shortly found to be groundless: for, in the same year, he was liberated and created Earl of Wiltshire, as a compensation for the injury which he had sustained.

The next deliberations of the council regarded the coronation and marriage of the King. Little did Henry then apprehend that the discussions, which were finally resolved into an approbation of his union with Katharine of Arragon, should involve him, in succeeding years, in a maze of

* The estates of Empson and Dudley were confiscated. The King granted a considerable portion of Empson's lands to Sir Henry Wyatt. *Nott's Life of Wyatt.* In 1511 the King restored John Dudley to the estates of his father, and, towards the end of his reign, bestowed upon him the place of Lord Admiral, and he afterwards became one of the most powerful subjects that ever existed in this country. The Dudleys were of ancient descent: Empson, on the other hand, was the son of a sieve-maker. See *Herbert*, p. 13.

difficulties, fears, and disappointments. It is necessary, in order to enter fully into the origin and the decline of his connection with that ill-fated Princess of Spain, to look back on the events of the preceding reign.

Henry the Seventh had always assiduously cherished the good-will and alliance of Ferdinand, King of Arragon; partly, because success had continually attended the career of that monarch; partly, from a similarity of policy and of character, and more, perhaps, because, from their respective situations, no jealousies and apprehensions could disturb the semblance of friendship which princes are obliged to maintain in their negociations with one another. The desire of Henry for a permanent union with Spain was gratified by the marriage of Arthur Prince of Wales with Katharine, Infanta of Portugal, the fourth daughter of Ferdinand and Isabella. Arthur was, at that time, sixteen and Katharine eighteen years of age.* They lived together for some months, when the death

* The extreme anxiety of Henry the Seventh to conclude the match between Arthur and Katharine, is evinced by an anecdote mentioned by Dr. Henry. "On his arriving at a village where Katherine was to lodge for the night, he was informed that the Princess had already retired to rest: but he announced his intention of visiting her bed-side, obliged her to rise and dress to receive him, and affianced

of Arthur frustrated the scheme of his father, and alarmed him lest the rich dowry which Katharine had brought, the most considerable with which any princess had enriched this country for many years, should, after its reception into his treasury, revisit the Spanish shores. * To prevent this disaster, he consented to a contract of marriage between Katharine and his youngest son, then Duke of York; who, it is said, made as strong an opposition to these nuptials, as so young a boy could evince; but, considering the thoughtless indifference usual at his time of life, to matters which do not affect the passing hour, little credit can be assigned to this tale of his repugnance.

1505. It is, however, certain, that at a more mature age, he protested against the union †: to which step he was, no doubt, instigated by the counsels of others. Warham, Archbishop of Canterbury, who had great influence with Henry the Seventh, strongly opposed this connection, and told the King that "it would be acceptable neither to God nor to man:" but Fox, Bishop of Winchester, combated that

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her that evening to his son, Prince Arthur." See *Henry's Hist. of Great Britain*, vol. xii. chap. vi. p. 351.

* *Lord Herbert*, p. 7.

† See protest of Henry against this marriage, in *Collier's Eccl. Hist. Records. No. 2.*

opinion with such arguments, as, for some time, at least, quieted the conscience of his sovereign. It has been confidently affirmed, that Henry the Seventh never thoroughly approved the marriage; and that, roused by the emphatic representations of Warham to a sense of its impropriety, he enjoined his son, with his dying breath, not to consummate so iniquitous a contract. The character of that king, however, renders this account improbable; the same avaricious motives were still as much in force, as when he assented to the objectionable proceeding; and it does not appear that he became less anxious to accumulate treasures in the later, than he had been in the earlier part of his reign. If the last reflections of this wary monarch were embittered by uneasiness on this point, it is less likely that religious fears suggested these scruples, than that the anticipation of those evils which might accrue from a disputed succession to the crown, disturbed his mind.*

Whatever qualms of self-reproach might have followed the betrothment of the young Prince Henry to Katharine, in the minds of the agents in that business, all possible means were taken to facilitate and to sanction the transaction.

* *Herbert*, p. 8. *Burnet*, vol. i. p. 63.

Two Popes, Alexander the Sixth, and Pius the Third, died, indeed, before they had settled the point; but a bull was easily obtained from Pope Julius the Second, who, besides his desire of strengthening an alliance which he had much at heart, as it would operate against Lewis the Twelfth of France, had cogent reasons for granting this dispensation. The children of so equivocal an union would have strong inducements to adhere firmly to the papacy, since, by disputing its authority, they would proclaim their own illegitimacy; the see of Rome might therefore calculate on the friendship of the English monarchs for some generations. The event, however, proved, that the capricious temper and arbitrary passions of one of the parties in this important proceeding converted the benefits to his successors anticipated by Julius, into consequences extremely detrimental to the papal authority.

The marriage-contract between Katharine and Henry was not completely ratified until after the accession of the young king to the throne, when contending opinions agitated the council respecting this important topic. The most experienced members of the council urged, in forcible terms, the completion of the nuptials. They represented, "that the same reasons that prompted their late sovereign to match his

eldest son with the Spanish princess, were still in force;" that, "since Henry had pretensions to the crown of France, no alliance in that quarter could be expected;" that "jealousies would arise between great estates which approximate, so that they might sometimes make peace, but never friendship." "Leagues and confederations," said these sage counsellors, "have in them sometimes the nature of harmonical concords, which jar in the second, but agree in the third interval." * They further suggested, how necessary it might be to conciliate so powerful a monarch as Ferdinand, whose assistance in checking the dreaded power of France, which had become still more formidable since the recent acquisition of Burgundy, would, in all probability, prove of vital importance to our national interests. Even the precepts of Holy Writ were adduced to sanction the connection: so frequently does it occur, that men, to support a favourite measure, will not fail to describe as correct and equitable that which they know to be merely expedient. † Thus, assured by the arguments of his council, by the approbation of the Pope, and by the wishes of his people, of the wisdom and policy

* *Lord Herbert*, p. 7.

† A text was adduced from Deuteronomy, chap. xxv., in support of marrying a brother's wife.

of the connection, and induced, by his own inclinations, to accede to it, Henry espoused Katharine of Arragon, six weeks after the death of his father, on the third, or as some historians affirm, on the seventh of June.

Great preparations were now made for the coronation of the royal pair*; for Henry, in this, and in all the subsequent ceremonies of his reign, evinced a taste for splendour, which, being then new to the people, contributed to their enthusiastic admiration of the graces and accomplishments, which in every entertainment it was his successful endeavour to display.

On the eleventh of June, the King came to the Tower from Greenwich, attended by many of the nobility, amongst whom the Duke of Buckingham was remarked for the costliness of his apparel, his robe being richly embroidered with gold. After creating twenty-four knights of the Bath, Henry, accompanied by Katharine, proceeded in state, according to usage at coronations, from the Tower, through the streets of London, which were hung for the occasion with tapestry and cloth of Arras. The inhabitants of part of Cornhill, and the south side of Cheap, desirous of surpassing

June 21. 1509.

* Sir Thomas More, then an obscure individual, wrote a poem on this occasion. See *Jortin's Erasmus*, vol. i.

their neighbours in splendour, had their houses hung with cloth of gold. Behind railings, stood every trade in its livery, beginning with the lowest, and ascending to the highest craft: the mayor and aldermen closed the list. From these useful but not attractive personages, the eyes of the spectator glanced with interest towards a groupe of virgins in white robes, emblematical of their own innocence, extending to the extremity of Old Change, bearing in their hands branches of white wax, and attended by guardian priests, whose rich copes formed a lively contrast to the simple attire of the females. Such were the accompaniments of the procession, while ever and anon the silver censers threw up a rich incense, to perfume the path of the gentle yet dignified Katharine, unconscious that the road which was thus varied by successive scenes of magnificence conducted her to future humiliation and sorrow.

The comely appearance of the King on this day, his affable demeanour, and his rich attire, have been celebrated by the chroniclers of the period.* Much less has been said respecting the personal attractions of the Queen; although one historian asserts that in her early days she was not, in beauty and dignity, easily to be paralleled: nor can we suppose that a woman, who, during

* *Hall and Holinshed*, 1st year of Henry VIII.

twenty years, retained the regard, although not the exclusive attachment of such a prince as Henry the Eighth, who set so much value upon external advantages, as even to think them requisite in his attendants, could be wholly devoid of external charms. The silence, however, respecting her appearance, maintained in those chronicles, which so minutely describe the graces of her consort, and of her rival, Anne Boleyn, seems to imply, either that she was not eminently handsome, or that the modesty and simplicity of her deportment, on public occasions, concealed her from universal admiration.* Henry was, on all occasions, extremely attentive to dress; in this respect the practice of the age absolves him, in some degree, from the foible of personal vanity. The coronation robes were of crimson velvet, furred with ermine; the vest was of brocaded gold; the placard, or front, embroidered with diamonds and immense pearls, and with rubies and other precious stones: round his neck hung a baldrick, or belt of balasses, a species of ruby; his steed was caparisoned in trappings of gold, with a purfle, or border of ermine. On this occasion the body knights and esquires were in crimson dresses: these personal

* Burnet speaks of her as "rough in her manners, and homely in her person"; but this was in the later period of her life.

attendants on the monarch were gentlemen archers, to the number of fifty. They had been recently enlisted by the King, and the Earl of Essex appointed their commander. The arms which they were allowed to bear consisted of a bow and arrows, a spear, and a demi-lance; and each archer was attended by a custrell, or buckler bearer.* After these knights came the King, then his chaplain, and all his household servants in scarlet dresses: but, previously, the rights of England over foreign territories had been displayed by two personages, bearing about their bodies two robes; one, denoting the supposed claims on the duchy of Guienne; the other, those on Normandy. The household were followed by the King's hat and cloak, borne by two persons. Sir Thomas Brandon, master of the horse, leading the King's courser by a rein of gold, in a harness of curious and valuable workmanship, followed the hat and cloak. The nine children of honour then made their appearance: their office was to designate, on the trappings of their horses, the titles of the English monarch to the realms of England and France, and to the provinces of Gascoigne, Guienne, Normandy, Anjou, Wales, and Ireland: the arms of these

* The habiliments of this troop, and the trappings of the horses, were so expensive, that they were shortly afterwards disbanded.

estates were severally wrought upon velvet, with embroidery of gold.

The retinue of the Queen was equally numerous and magnificent. It must be observed, that, on this occasion, Katharine was attired as a virgin. She was seated upon a litter drawn by two white palfreys, which were covered with white cloth of gold: her dress was of white embroidered satin; her hair, which was very beautiful, and of great length, hung in tresses down her back; and her head was crowned with a dazzling coronet of orient jewels. The procession was closed by a train of whirlecotes, a species of chariot *; for coaches, similar to those which are now used, were not known in this country until a later period. In these vehicles sat ladies of quality, the fair ornaments of a scene, which the joyousness of the occasion, and the youth and attractions which gave, even to royalty, additional interest, combined with the hope of future peace to a land which had long been agitated by the cruel discords of civil war, united to render one of the most memorable, exhilarating, and splendid, that England had witnessed during several centuries. The acclamations of the multitude attended the train, as it slowly proceeded to the palace of Westminster, where diligent preparation had been made for its reception.

* *Hall*, p. 503.

June 21. On the day following the procession of the royal pair, the ceremony of the coronation was performed. The youthful King and Queen, each under a canopy, carried by the Barons of the Cinque Ports, repaired to the sacred shrine of Westminster. A platform had been raised for the accommodation of the procession, and it was covered with what was then vulgarly called cloth of ray, which was seized and divided by the rude hands of the crowd, in England even then proverbially disdainful of decorum, as soon as the King and Queen had entered the Abbey.

After the ceremony of anointing the monarch and his consort had been completed, the usual question was demanded of the people, whether "they would receive as their sovereign the noble Prince Henry?" which received an enthusiastic assent. The homage of the nobles was then accepted; and the procession, removing to Westminster Hall, the arrangements which were necessary for those persons, who had privileges to do service to the King, were settled by the tipstaves.

The King and the Queen were seated on a stage, elevated at the extremity of the Hall. On the first service being brought in, the trumpets sounded, and the Duke of Buckingham, accompanied by the Lord High Steward, and mounted on a courser, the trappings of which were richly

embossed with gold, rode before the service. At the King's feet, under the table, sat several gentlemen during the feast; and the same act of humble reverence, or, according to our present ideas, of unnecessary abasement, was performed towards the Queen.* The feast was, in the words of the chronicler Hall, "long and royal." He expatiates with enthusiasm on the "honourable ordre of the services," on "the cleane handelying and breakying of meates," the "ordering of the dishes, and plentiful abundaunce." But, as he kindly spares us the enumeration of the particular viands which refreshed the royal palate, we must be satisfied with the assurance, that "none of any estate beeing there, did lacke, nor no honourable or worshipful person go unfeasted."

On the second course being served, all eyes were directed towards the door of the Hall; when, behold! a knight entered on a courser, armed at all points; his helmet surmounted with towering plumes, and his bases richly embroidered: on the trappings of his horse were wrought the arms of England and France. This martial figure, preceded by a herald at arms, riding up the Hall, presented himself to the King and Queen, with a low reverence;

* On ordinary occasions this place was reserved for the king's fool or jester. See *Treatise on Kervyng*, in *Ames's History of Typography*.

then Garter, King at arms, cried out to him, "Sir Knight, whence come you, and what is your pretence?" "Sir," replied the unknown warrior, "the place from which I come is not material, nor the cause of my repairing hither concerning matter of any country, but only this:" then commanding his herald to make an oyez; "Now," said he, "shall ye know the cause of my coming and pretence." "If there be any person, of what estate or condition soever he may be, that will say or prove that King Henry is not the rightful inheritor of this realm, I, Sir Robert Dimmocke, here his champion, offer my glove to fight his quarrel to the uttermost." * This proclamation was made several times in the Hall, and his gauntlet cast down, in support of the challenge; but no opponent appearing, the knight returned to the King, and demanded, not only to drink from a golden cup, but to retain the cup and cover as his right; and having received them, he departed from the Hall, and entering the armoury, by right of his tenure, selected thence a suit, next in value to the richest there; the best and richest bases, save one set; and a plume for his helmet. From the armoury the champion proceeded to the stable, whence he chose the horse, considered to be the second in value.

After the tables had been cleared, and the

* *Hall's Chronicles*, 1st year of Henry VIII. p. 509.

wafers brought *, Sir Stephen Jennings, then mayor of London, who had been dubbed a knight before the banquet, served the King with ypocrass †, in a cup of gold, which he claimed. The ceremony of washing was then performed; the King and Queen having retired into their private apartments, and the company separated.

It is remarkable, that after the lapse of three centuries, when our manners, dress, pursuits, amusements, condition and even language, are materially changed, and when, from the alteration in our political and religious affairs, much of the pageantry attending the coronation of our kings has lost all relevancy to the present period, so many of the customary ceremonials should be retained. Perhaps this circumstance may be derived from the lively and attractive character of these rites and customs, which are calculated to amuse and to interest all ranks of people: perhaps from the difficulty of substituting others which would be equally popular and impressive. Whatever may be the cause, the effect produced

* The service of paying for, and of placing five wafers before the King, as he sits at dinner, on the day of his coronation, belongs to the owner of the manor of Overhale, in the parish of Liston, in Essex. *Weaver's Funeral Mon.* p. 627.

† Ypocrass, a costly beverage, used chiefly at royal banquets, was composed of red wine, cinnamon, ginger, and other spices, run through a woollen bag, in the same manner as our modern jellies. See *Strutt's Manners and Customs*, vol. iii. p. 74.

by the representation of those chivalrous ceremonials of our ancestors, when right was to be defended at the sword's point, in single combat, will long continue to afford the same species of enjoyment which we participate, when we witness in a drama the events of former days, and are carried back in idea to the interests and passions of our forefathers.

The festivities which usually succeeded the coronation were in the present instance, however, checked by the death of Margaret Countess of Richmond, who closed an eventful and virtuous life on the twenty-ninth of June; having lived just long enough to behold her grandson seated upon the throne. Other events tended also, during the first year of this reign, to cast a gloom over the court, which, but for untoward circumstances, would have presented a scene of constant pastime and rejoicings. The king was obliged, towards the close of the year, to retreat to his palace at Richmond, not only from respect to the queen, who awaited there her confinement, but from the prevalence of the sweating sickness, which then raged in the capital. This disease, which was a species of ephemeral fever, had first appeared in London in 1486, and had acquired its name from the nature of the symptoms with which the sufferers were attacked. The vitiated grain which was in use about this period

has been assigned as the cause of this dangerous and afflicting malady; and the inference is partly deduced from the circumstance that the "contemporary inhabitants of Scotland and Wales, who fed on oaten or barley instead of wheaten bread, were not affected." But the dissemination of this fever in Holland, Germany, France, Flanders, Norway, and Denmark, renders this supposition improbable; and leads rather to a conclusion, agreeable to the opinion of an ingenious writer of the present day, that it "was more probably a peculiar contagion, that has long since worn itself out, and become decomposed, though it may still be latent, and only waiting for its proper auxiliaries once more to shew itself in the field."*

The consequences of this sickness were so speedy, and in most cases so awful, that a discovery of the source of the evil would have been a most desirable blessing, as leading to the prevention of its recurrence; but the deficiency in medical skill at this era prevented any hope of effectual remedy, or of those means being adopted which might render the individuals less liable to the disease. The lively description which the chronicler, Hall, gives of this kind of pestilence, impresses on the mind a strong sense

* See note in *Dr. Good's Nosology, from Willan*, p. 125. — Also *note* in p. 121.

of its distressful nature, and of its dreadful effects. "For sodenly," says he, "a dedlye and burning sweate inuaded their bodyes and vexed their blood with a most ardēt heate, infested the stomach and heade greuously: by the tormentyng and vexacion of which sicknes, men were so sore handled and so painfully pangued that if they were laid in their bed, beyng not able to suffre the importune heate, they cast away the shetes and all the clothes lying on the bed."* An intolerable thirst accompanied these sensations, and some of the sufferers drank freely of cold water to relieve this distressing consequence of fever; while others more resolute, endured their anguish, and heaped on additional covering, to increase the profuse perspiration which formed the most prominent symptom of the disorder. Relapses were very frequent; and the weakness produced by repeated attacks of the disease, generally occasioned a fatal decline. After much mournful experience, it was found that a moderate encouragement of the perspiration produced relief; and that remaining in bed, and drinking warm fluids for four-and-twenty hours, rendered the consequences of the sickness less formidable.†

* *Hall's Chronicles*, p. 425, 426.

† Ibid.

The second visitation of this public calamity, which obliged Henry to quit the metropolis, occurred in 1509, and was communicated to the English garrison at Calais: and although it was less severe than the preceding, it was calculated that thirty thousand persons perished in the metropolis, during a short space of time, from this inveterate sickness: nor did itentirely abandon the capital during the course of forty years, after this visitation.

Meanwhile the king prepared to keep his Christmas at Richmond. In compliance with the notions of propriety which then prevailed, and which had been partly instilled among the ladies of the court by the Countess of Richmond, the queen had taken up her abode at Richmond, in order to keep her chamber during the three last months of her pregnancy. Henry welcomed, with cordial satisfaction, on new year's
1510. day, the birth of a son; and processions, bonfires, and an abundant distribution of wine in the public streets, were amongst the indications of joy for the entrance of the infant prince into a world, in which he was not destined long to remain. A splendid christening was prepared: the infant received the name of Henry; the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Earl of Surrey officiating as god-fathers, and the Countess of Devonshire,

daughter of Edward the Fourth, as god-mother.* The queen, after her recovery, removed to Westminster, where solemn jousts were held in her honour. But soon afterwards, her domestic happiness received its first shock from the death of her son, an event which plunged her into the deepest affliction. The grief of Henry was acute; and when the calamity was again inflicted by the hand of Providence, in the early decease of another son, he is said to have attributed his disappointments to the judgments of Heaven, chastising him for the sin of an unhallowed and unlawful marriage. Whether this representation of his feelings be just, or not, must be doubtful: during the whole of his life, however, he manifested extreme anxiety for the birth of a male heir to the crown; and ever displayed that restless jealousy concerning the succession to the throne, which he received as an inheritance from his father, and which he appears to have bequeathed to his daughters. But his sorrow, although on these accounts more severe than it would otherwise have been for the loss of so young a child, was far less poignant than that of the queen. Her pleasures consisted in the retired duties of domestic life, which render the natural affections peculiarly tenacious, and

Feb. 22.

* *Holinshed*, p. 561.

requisite for our happiness. To conciliate the wishes of the king, and to gratify the people, she mingled in scenes of pomp and gaiety, which she dignified by her stately deportment and correct example; but her own inclinations tended to more tranquil enjoyments. Her distress was, therefore, proportionably greater than that of the king. "The queen," says Hall, "like a naturall woman, made much lamentation; how be it, by the king's good grace and persuasion, her sorrow was mitigated, but not shortlye."

CHAP. II.

Character of Henry in his youth. — His diversions. — Characteristic dispositions. — English youth at this period. — Travelling abroad. — Court. — Its deficiency in splendour and refinement. — Causes. — The domestic condition of the Nobility. — The inconveniencies of the olden times. — Mode of making short journeys. — Improvements in dwelling houses. — Dress. — Its extremes. — Importance attached to it by Henry. — Gaiety and splendour introduced by Henry. — Tournaments; that which succeeded the coronation. — Charles Brandon. — The Howards. — The pageant. — Henry fond of disguises. — Banquet at Shrovetide. — Other diversions of the king. — Tilting at the ring. — May-day. — The royal progress. — The king's musical productions. — St. John's day. — Mustering of the city watch. — Combat with battle-axes in Greenwich Park.

History has depicted the character of Henry the Eighth, chiefly in the light of a scholastic pedant, a grave theologian, a remorseless tyrant over his people, and a slave to his own passions. Few kings have, however, displayed greater variety of powers, or greater opposition of qualities, than this celebrated monarch; and when we contemplate the most prominent points of his character during the later years of his reign, we are surprized, on reverting to the season of his youth, to find him displaying a disposition which augured happiness and peace to his people.

Possessed of many natural advantages, tall and manly in his person, and of a comely countenance, Henry had been carefully instructed in those acquirements which are necessary to give grace and popularity to the deportment of a prince. By the exercise of these his youth was principally diversified; they constituted even the business of his days: to enter fully into these modes of pastime it is requisite to make some cursory remarks upon the manners and pursuits of the period.

The institutions of chivalry, although its spirit was fast declining, were displayed with greater splendour during the commencement of the sixteenth century than when it had flourished most; and, how inconsistent soever the character of Henry might subsequently prove with its exalted professions, he set out in his career with a full determination to support them in their utmost extent.* Early in his reign, he evinced his intention of supporting the order of the garter, by holding a chapter, which he repeated with regularity at the appointed times, and to which he afterwards added a feast, equal in splendour to

May 18.

* Henry took the order of the garter under his especial patronage; so anxious was he for its fame to remain unsullied, that when any knight had been attainted for treason, he would not permit that his name should be expunged from the list of knights, but desired that the words "Oh traitor!" should be inserted in the margin. *Reg. Order of the Garter*, p. 17.

a coronation.* "The education of our English gentry," says a modern writer, in treating of this period, "was nearly as chivalric then as at any period of our history. Boys were sent to school to learn to read at four years of age; at six they were taught languages, and the first principles of manners; from ten to twelve dancing and music were added to their accomplishments, and politeness was particularly encouraged. At fourteen they were initiated into the sports of the field, which prepared them for the ruder exercise of arms. At sixteen they were taught to joust, to fight at the barriers, to manage the war-horse, to assail castles, to support the weight of armour, and to contend in feats of arms with their companions." † To this course of instruction, the English youth of high descent began, at this period, to add another source of improvement. The practice of travelling abroad now first became prevalent; and, to complete the education of an accomplished knight or courtier, it was necessary that he should pass some time at one or other of the universities of Paris, Padua, Bologna, or Bourges. ‡ The general utility of such a custom seems to have been rendered questionable by its

* Ibid. p. 400.

† *Mills's Hist. of Chivalry, and its Times,* vol. ii. p. 116.

‡ Paris celebrated for scholastic theology; Bologna and Orleans, and afterwards Bourges, for jurisprudence; Montpelier for medicine. *Hallam's Middle Ages,* vol. iii. p. 529.

effects; for while it excited honourable minds to improvement in those arts which embellish and diversify the ordinary scenes of life, it produced, in too many instances, an arrogant contempt of English manners, and a disregard of moral ties and obligations. "When they came back again," says Hall, speaking of those young gallants who had thus mistaken licentiousness for good breeding, "they were all French in eating, in drinking, and apparel; yea, and in French brags and vices; so that all estates of England were by them laughed at, the ladies and gentlewomen were dispraised, and nothing was by them praised if it were not after the French turn." * The endeavour, even to assume refinement, might, however, be considered as an amelioration in the manners of the court, which, in its convivial discourses at this period, resembled a low company of persons in a tavern, rather than a polite assemblage of high-born and well-bred persons. †

The reign of the late king had contributed little to add to the enjoyments, or to polish the

* *Hall's Chronicles*, p. 597.

† It was during the reign of Henry the Eighth that Andrew Borde, "a mad physician and a dull poet," published the jests of Scogan, a celebrated buffoon in the court of Edward the Fourth; these "jests" are not only without either humour or invention, but consist of the lowest strain of ribaldry; and coarse indeed must have been the public taste which sanctioned their publication. *Warton's Hist. Eng. Poet.* vol. ii. p. 125.

manners of his court. Few had been the attractions to the metropolis, which was visited but rarely, even by the higher classes of persons in distant counties; and by them only when parliament, or other business, demanded their presence. The taste for social enjoyments had been depressed by a long continuance of civil war, in which many gay and gallant nobles had perished, some families had been almost extinguished, and all were in some degree impoverished. Among those ancient houses which maintained their former splendour animosities prevailed; and, whilst the manifest partiality of Henry the Seventh to the house of Lancaster gave continual fuel to discord, only the semblance of union existed.

Immured on these accounts from frequent intercourse with society, persons of rank, during the early part of the sixteenth century, remained chiefly in their castles, where they kept up a degree of state almost approaching to that with which royalty was surrounded. The expences of these establishments, the manner in which the household was framed, the wages of the domestics, and the regulations by which they were to be controuled, were enacted by a council similar to that of the king; and warrants were issued, signed by the master of the house: the concerns of the castle were superintended by officers of the same name and commission as those in

the royal household. * The clerical inmates were almost equally numerous; and, in these days of superstitious ceremonial, religious rites constituted a considerable portion of the ordinary expences. In the castle of Wresil in Yorkshire, the Earl of Northumberland, one of the richest peers of his time, supported eleven priests, over whom a doctor of divinity presided. † To relieve the tedium of retirement to minds not too well stored with intellectual resources, it was requisite, occasionally, to receive and remunerate strolling players and minstrels ‡; and at the season of Christmas, to attach to each baronial residence, an abbot of misrule §, whose office was to contrive and superintend the revels, in which all persons were then usually engaged.

* These officers were gentlemen by birth, and sat at a table called the Knight's Board. *Northumberland Household Book*, 447.

† The priests were employed in secular concerns, and fulfilled, in the earl's household, the offices of secretary, surveyor, &c.; they were even obliged to deliver in their accounts on the Sunday. Two of them entitled the Gospeller and Pistoler, to read the Gospel and Epistle; another performed the office of Almoner. Ibid. p. 231. — 448.

‡ Three minstrels were usual in the household: their instruments were the tabouret, lute, and rebeck; the rebeck was a fiddle with three strings. Ibid.

§ "*Item. The abbot of misrewl at Chrystymās* xxs." Ibid. — The attendants employed in other offices were of a description which would not be allowed in modern mansions. Among other entries occur, two *rokkers* and a childe to attend upon the nurse, "and a childe to turn the broche," or spit. Ibid.

Occasionally, to enjoy the sweets of privacy and ease, the lord of the castle retired into what was called his "secret house," a small lodge within the precincts of his own domain, and guarded by its proximity to his lofty towers. Here, retaining only a few of his domestics, the younger sons performed the offices of cup-bearer, ewerer, and carver; and here something of domestic felicity might be enjoyed. *

Yet it must not be inferred, from all this pomp and pride of station, that our ancestors, at this period, were acquainted with many of the luxuries, or even with what, in our days, are justly termed the comforts of life. Dinner at ten o'clock in the day; the daily use of wooden trenchers, with pewter on holidays; the absence of forks, and the prevalent neglect of cleanliness, must be taken into account, when we look back to the repasts of olden times. † These were not, however, by any means entirely destitute of

* The Earl (and others in his station) sat at dinner on a raised place at the extremity of a hall, in the lower part of which was a table for the inferior personages of his household. His sons, as far down as the third, his lady and brother, had alone the privilege of sitting with him at the "bord's end." The almoner, carver, cup-bearer, gentlemen yeomen, and gentlemen waiters, were to wait at the Earl's table, and to have the "*revercion*" of his dinner. The distinction of the salt-cellar in the lower table is well known. See *Household Book of the Earl of Northumberland.*

† Forks were not introduced into this country until the time of James I.; and when first brought into use (after the example of the Italians who eat with a little fork) it was, of

attraction to the epicure. Game in abundance, and sometimes of the finest quality; fish, on which Polydore Virgil, a foreigner and a churchman, expatiated with complacency; and the recent introduction of beer and of vegetables, might render the repast tolerable: but, to counterbalance these auxiliaries to appetite, it must be remembered, that from Michaelmas to Easter salt beef was the only meat allotted for general consumption; that vegetables were scarce, and, as well as the feathered tribe, allowed only to the upper table. The consumption of ale and of wine seems also to have been regulated with still greater attention to economy. * To these deprivations must be added the inconvenience attending the want of regular markets, news-

course, thought a piece of affectation and unnecessary refinement to employ their agency in preference to fingers. Hence the custom of washing in a ewer before and after meat. *Household Book of the Earl of Northumberland*, 418.

* The common saying, that "Hops and heresy came into England in the same year," is incorrect, since we find "Malt and hops for my lord's bere" a frequent entry in the earl's Household Book, as early as the third year of Henry the Eighth. It is probable that hops were not cultivated before this period in England, but imported from Flanders.

Turkies, carp, picarell, and beere,
Ceame into England all in one yere.

It is remarkable that the turkey is not mentioned in the Household Book of Northumberland: cranes (then as common as herons), bysters or bitterns, reys or ruffs, wypes or lapwings (wipa, still the Swedish name), yerns, sea swallow, pheasants, sea gulls, are all specified as frequently ordered for my lord's table. Ibid.

papers, and posts; bad roads; and the necessity of removing beds, wardrobes, and even hangings, on every change which the lord of the mansion might chuse to make from one manor to another, from necessity or from choice. * Nor was it an easy matter to remove. Travelling on horseback was almost the only mode of conveyance for the male sex, and the most frequent method for the females. Coaches were not introduced until some years afterwards †; but a species of horse litter, chair, or charre, was sometimes convenient in processions, or in short journeys, but tedious and troublesome in expeditions of length. The ladies of this period were, however, excellent horsewomen; nor did they disdain the assistance of the pillion, so universally disused and despised by modern dames. ‡ Catharine of Arragon, the day after her marriage to Prince Arthur, was appointed to ride towards Baynard's Castle, either in a litter, or on her spare horse, on a pillion, behind some lord appointed by the king, with eleven ladies following her on their palfreys.

* This was done even in the royal residence. "The king's removing wardrobe" is enumerated in the list of his goodes, "stuffe," &c. See note to *Earl of Northumberland's Household Book.*

† In 1580, by Fitz Alan Earl of Arundel. Ibid. p. 448.

‡ Margaret, queen of James the Fourth, entered the town of Edinburgh behind her husband in the same manner. *Leland's Collectanea.*

Improvements, however, in the comfort of a dwelling-house now became visible: carpets were brought into vogue, and clocks were in common use; glass, that friend to light and cleanliness, supplied the place of lattice and horn in windows, and was becoming abundant; earthenware, though of a coarse kind, began to assert its superiority over wood for culinary purposes; and table cloths, or portpaines, gave some degree of elegance to the domestic board.*

But, in one respect, the reign of Henry the Eighth was indeed an era of luxury. Dress, which will ever be a subject of importance, while the respect which is bestowed on individuals is influenced by external advantages, was at this period a matter of so much moment as to require the interference of the legislature to restrain its excesses, and to define its limits. A sumptuary law against extremes in the fashion of wearing apparel was repealed by Henry early

* Carpets of Turkey, of English making, and of needle-work, bound in buckram, are among the articles enumerated in the king's household stuffe. "Glasse dishes of earthe," and metal dishes are also mentioned. *Harleian M.S.* 2284. In the household of the Earl of Northumberland, "ashen" dishes are specified. An important acquisition to the lower classes, also, was the increased cultivation of wheat, which now began to be used in bread in preference to rye, barley, and oats, mixed sometimes with beans and bran, of which that article was generally composed for the use of servants and the poor. See *Preface to Household Book of the Earl of Northumberland.*

in his reign, and a more moderate regulation substituted. The annulled statute, enacted by Edward the Fourth, had been intended to mark out the distinctions due to those of the blood royal in the appropriation of cloth of gold, and of purple velvet, to their use, under a penalty of twenty pounds upon any one who should invade this privilege. A similar fine was inflicted on all who, being under the degree of a lord, should presume to wear a gown lower than the hips.* The venerable Countess of Richmond, in her "Orders for Precedence," had regulated the modes of female dress, especially in relation to public mournings.† Laws had been previously framed by English monarchs, and even anathemas denounced by the clergy, against immoderate splendour, or absurdity in fashion; yet, notwithstanding all these endeavours to promote the interests of etiquette and consistency, the appearance of a gentleman in the sixteenth century, in the extreme of fashionable attire, presented as much absurdity as could possibly have been collected in one individual. At first, it was difficult to decide which of the sexes was entitled to the obloquy of owning a creature in a long petticoat; a large doublet laced in front over

* Twelve knights were excepted by name from this restriction. See *Acts*, 22 Edw. 4. cap. 1.

† See *Walpole's Royal and Noble Authors*, vol. i. p. 235.

a stomacher; and a wide sleeved mantle descending in folds to the feet. This ambiguous attire was not, however, of long duration; and early in the reign of Henry the Eighth, the trauses or trouzers were adopted, and the mantle and doublet discarded. In process of time, the monarch became corpulent; and that which was actually a disease, was assumed by his flattering courtiers as a grace. The hair was worn long by the men; until Henry, in imitation of Charles the Fifth of Germany, ordered the heads of his household to be shaved, and set them the example. It was at this period that perukes were introduced*, and that cuffs for the sleeves and frills for the neck became general. The pocket, commodious in every stage of society, was still unknown in its perfection; a loose pouch, suspended from the girdle, occasionally supplied its place.

The dress of females of rank was restrained by limitations of a nature somewhat similar to those which restricted the absurdities of male attire, and was less extravagant. The gown, composed of silk or velvet, was shortened or lengthened according to the rank of the wearer. The countess was obliged by

* "Paid for Saxton, the King's fool, for a wig, 20*s.*" is a charge made by the treasurer of the chambers to Henry the Eighth. *Walpole's Royal and Noble Authors.*

the rules of etiquette to have a train both behind and before, which she hung upon her arm, or fastened in her girdle; the baroness and all under her degree were prohibited from assuming that badge of distinction. The matron was distinguished from the unmarried woman by the different mode of their head attire: the hood of the former had recently been superseded by a coif or close bonnet, of which the pictures of Holbein give a representation; while the youthful and the single, with characteristic simplicity, wore the hair braided with knots of ribbon.*

The materials of the dresses at this period were costly; and were sometimes enriched by embroidery, and by the addition of precious stones. Such was the demand for cloths of gold and silver, for velvets and damasks, that three or four thousand pieces of these articles were in one year imported from Italy.† This number may appear trifling in the present day, when such materials of dress are not confined to any particular class or rank of persons, but may be worn by all who can afford to purchase them; but in those times of aristocratic pride, persons of inferior rank were obliged to adhere to a

* *Henry's Hist. Great Britain*, vol. xii. p. 271. — *Andrews' Hist. Great Britain*, vol. i. p. 2. 333.

† *Acts*, 5 of Henry the Eighth.

simple and serviceable garment, made of woollen or of hempen cloth, somewhat resembling the Saxon tunic; and from this picturesque mantle or gown, the frock of the waggoner, still in use in most of the counties of England, is supposed to have been derived.*

Henry the Eighth placed so much importance upon dress, that during his reign the wardrobes of the nobility increased to many times their former value, while his own exceeded in costliness that of any preceding monarch. The manifest advantages resulting to trade, as well as a taste for ostentatious display, may have been the motive of the encouragement which this monarch bestowed upon those who, in this respect, did most honour to his court: and, in an age when the distinctions of mental superiority were less understood or acknowledged than at present, it is not surprising that external advantages should be held in undue estimation.

To the frequent and alluring festivities with which the court was enlivened, may be also attributed the increase of luxury, in other respects, among the nobility. The gay, the gallant, and

* *Henry's Hist. England,* vol. vii. p. 371.

The English have ever been noted for whimsicality of attire; and the frequent change of their garments has been emblematically satirized by the representation of a naked figure, with a pair of shears in his hand, and cloth on his arms, perplexed how to decide amidst a multiplicity of garments. *Andrews' Hist. Gt. Britain.*

the rich, had now a place of resort where they could dissipate time, and display their attractions, accomplishments, and wealth. The queen, in the early days of her marriage, although displaying the characteristic gravity of her nation, was far from evincing any repugnance to those diversions in which the king delighted. She gave, on the contrary, a sanction to them by her presence, which allowed the ladies of the court to enjoy, and, in some measure, to impart, refinement, to scenes in which their fair descendants might deem it improper, and even revolting, to enter.* Let it, however, be remembered, before we condemn too hastily the masculine amusements of the women of the sixteenth century, that the qualities of self-possession, courage, and fortitude, always commendable, and entirely compatible with feminine virtues, were indispensable in unsettled times; and were acquired and improved by familiarity with those diversions which presented the conflicts without the dangers of war.

In splendour and importance, the tournament and the joust must have precedence, in enumerating the sports of this period. To these exercises Henry gave unremitting attention, and not to display proficiency in them, was almost to lose his favour; yet some discretion was also

* See *Hall* and *Holinshed*.

required to rival, but not to excel the king, whose ardent temper could not brook superiority in another; accordingly, how dexterous soever the combatants might be in feats of arms, victory was always reserved for royalty.* Yet, as the king sometimes fought disguised, it is but fair to allow that he was no mean adept in those pursuits for which his bodily powers and continual practice had qualified him. Tournaments, a name which formerly applied to every military combat, consisted of three separate amusements: tilting at the quintain, running at the ring, and jousting or fighting in single combat. The tournament, as a general term, was applied to conflicts in which many persons were engaged at once, divided into parties. The joust was sometimes practised independent of the tournament: and both these modes of combat were carried on either on horseback or on foot, according to circumstances. The barriers, another species of contest in which Henry was skilled, was a battle with axes, in which those engaged, were prevented from coming into close contact by a barrier, breast high, placed between them.† These games had long been the recreation of the noble and valorous, both in England and on the continent; and although they had been repeatedly prohibited by the

* See numerous instances in *Hall* and *Holinshed*.

† *Strutt's Sports and Pastimes*, p. 103—135.

church, on account of the dangerous accidents and bitter contentions which had frequently converted the scene of mirth and enjoyment into a tragedy, long remembered by the sufferers, they continued to be idolized by those who from their wealth could partake of them in a style suitable to their rank*, and by all who aspired to the distinction of superior skill and courage. † The risk of fatal consequences attending tournaments was, in the time of Henry, partly diminished: formerly, "meaning nothing in hate, but all in honour," the combatants, nevertheless, fought with sharp swords, and lances, as in battle; and although the number of blows was regulated, and rules laid down to prevent bloodshed, the festivities were often disturbed by the death of one or more of the

* Jousts and tournaments were brought into vogue by King Stephen; and were productive of so much slaughter, from the barbarous manner in which they were sometimes carried on, that parliament decreed that all those who were killed in the encounters should be denied Christian burial, and their heirs disinherited. *Weaver's Funeral Mon.* p. 443.

† They were usually exercised during this reign in the tilt-yard adjoining Saint James's Park, south from Charing Cross. *Stowe's Survey*, p. 495. After Henry had converted Whitehall into a royal palace, he added to it a splendid gallery and gatehouse, whence ladies, and those of the nobility who were not engaged in the lists, could view the tournaments. Ibid.

parties engaged.* In process of time, it was found necessary to introduce arms of courtesy, consisting of lances without heads, and with round braces at the extremity called rockets; the swords were blunted, and every precaution was adopted to prevent injurious consequences. In these combats, nevertheless, bruises were often severe and painful; and the heavy armour, which the rules of the game required, proved occasionally detrimental to the warrior.

Henry had not always the good fortune to escape the dangers to which all who engaged in these sports were equally exposed; and he was sometimes alarmed for the result of the extreme ardour in combat which impelled his young courtiers to use too much violence in this mimic war: accordingly, we often find him hastily closing the amusements of the day, when he perceived that the spirit of emulation began to border upon rancour and hatred. The weapons which the king usually employed were rather different from those which were used in general, as he carried a battle-axe, as well as a two-handed sword; but doubtless these were blunted, as well as the arms of his opponents.

In the splendid tournament which immediately succeeded the coronation of Henry, it was

* See *Supplement to the Encyclopedia Britannica*, art. Chivalry.

probably considered indecorous that he should take an active part so recently after the death of his father. He was, therefore, at this time, merely a spectator, while the scene of amicable rivalship was performed. Among the most distinguished knights, Charles Brandon was pre-eminent, not only for his personal beauty and the elegance which attended every movement which the various evolutions of the game required, but for his courage, judgment, and skill, qualities which he displayed afterwards on more important occasions. This celebrated man, the son of Sir William Brandon, who, bearing the standard of Henry the Seventh, was slain by Richard the Third at Bosworth field, had been educated in habits of the strictest intimacy with the young king; and always retained his affection and regard. In the constancy of that regard which Henry professed for Brandon, it is agreeable, to those who wish to view human nature under its most favourable aspect, to see an exception to the numerous circumstances which have justly affixed the reproach of caprice to the character of that monarch. Brandon was, however, as cautious and politic in the court as he was enterprizing and courageous in the field; and, while his military exploits secured his reputation for valour, he generally yielded the

palm of victory to his sovereign in the mimic wars of the tournament.

Three sons of the Howard family were also distinguished upon this occasion. The atchievements and merits of Lord Thomas Howard, afterwards Duke of Norfolk, will be unfolded hereafter: at this period of our narrative, he was regarded as one of the most promising warriors, and as one of the most dissolute men at the court of Henry. Sir Edward and Sir Edmund Howard, the one famed for naval exploits, the other less remarkable, but not without celebrity for courage; Sir Thomas Knevet, master of the horse; and Lord Nevile, brother to the Marquis of Dorset, filled up the lists of the combat on one side, and took the field. "The trumpets blew to the field; the fresh, young gallants and noblemen gorgeously apparelled, with curious devices of cuts and of embroideries, as well in their coats as in trappers for their horses; some in gold, some in silver, some in tinsels, and divers others in goldsmith's work; goodly to behold." * Such was the array in which the young knights came forth to combat, assuming the name and devices of the Knights of Pallas. This band was opposed by another, entitled Diana's knights, bearing as their trophy

* *Holinshed*, vol. iii. p. 551.

a golden spear, and professing to be the champions of the fair sex. The attire of both parties was equally fanciful, and suitable to the allegorical character of the whole scene. The knights or *scholars* of Pallas, were clothed in garments of green velvet, carrying a chrystal shield, on which was pourtrayed the goddess Minerva, and had the bases and bards of their horses embroidered with roses and pomegranates of gold; those of Diana were decorated with the bramble bush, displayed in a similar manner. The prize of valour was the chrystal shield. Between the lists, the spectators were amused with a pageant, representing a park enclosed with pales, containing fallow deer, and attended by foresters and huntsmen. This park being moved towards the place where the queen sat, the gates were opened, the deer were let out, pursued by greyhounds, killed, and presented by Diana's champions to the queen and ladies. Thus were they included in the amusement, not only as observers, but as participators: nor were the populace without their share of enjoyments; streams of Rhenish wine and of claret, which flowed from the mouths of animals sculptured in stone and wood, were appropriated to their refreshment. Night closed on the joyous scene; but before its approach the king, perceiving that the ardour of the combatants had become

intemperate and dangerous, wisely limited the number of strokes, closed the tourney, and distributed the prizes. *

It was about this period that the tournament ceased to be merely a chivalric combat; and, united with the pageant, acquired more of the dramatic character. † The pageant consisted of a temporary building, moved on vices, generally representing castles, rocks, mountains, palaces, gardens, or forests. The decoration of these ambulating scenes was attended with considerable expence, but was seldom conducted with taste or consistency. ‡ They generally contained figures, personating a curious medley of nymphs, savages, heathen gods, and Christian saints, giants, and the nine worthies, who descended and danced among the spectators. On the night of the Epiphany,

1510. a pageant was introduced into the hall at Richmond, representing a hill studded with gold and precious stones; and having on its summit a tree of gold, from which hung roses and pomegranates. From the declivity of the hill descended a lady richly attired, who, with the gentlemen, or, as they were then called, children, of honour, danced a morris before the king.

* *Holinshed*, p. 552. † *Mills's Chivalry*, vol. ii. p. 105.

‡ The upper apartments in Leadenhall were generally used for this purpose in the time of Henry the Eighth. *Stowe's Survey of London.*

On another occasion, in the presence of the court, an artificial forest was drawn in by a lion and an antelope, the hides of which were richly embroidered with golden ornaments; the animals were harnessed with chains of gold, and on each sat a fair damsel in gay apparel. In the midst of the forest, which was thus introduced, appeared a gilded tower, at the gates of which stood a youth, holding in his hands a garland of roses, as the prize of valour in a tournament which succeeded the pageant. *

* *Hall's Chronicles*, p. 517.

These devices sometimes conveyed unwelcome significations. Great offence, for instance, was given to Queen Mary by a pageant, in which her father, Henry the Eighth, appeared as one of the nine worthies painted in harness, having a sword in one hand, and a book in the other, on which was inscribed *verbum Dei*. The painter was summoned before the bishop of Winchester, reprimanded, and ordered to erase the inscription. *Strutt's Sports and Pastimes, Introd.* p. 25.

Nature was totally forgotten in most of these contrivances. In the pageant at Chester, was an *animal called a Flower-de-luce*. Ibid.

The materials and charges for these compositions are very amusing. Some of them run thus: "for finding all the materials, with the workmanship of the four great giants, all to be made new, as neere as may be lyke as they were before, at five pounds a giant, the least that can be, and four men to carry them, at two shillings and sixpence each." Also, "arsenick to put into the paste, to save the giants from being eaten by the rats, one shilling." This was in the time of Charles the Second. See *Strutt*, from *MS. Harl.* 2125. *Introd.* p. 25.

The Lord Mayor's show, as it was conducted twenty or thirty years since, the procession of Lady Godiva at Coventry, the woolcombers' procession at Warwick, and other provincial customs, are remains of the ancient pageantry.

Henry delighted to present himself in disguised characters before the queen, who feigned surprise and perturbation at his strange appearance, if she did not really feel them. On one occasion he presented himself unexpectedly in her chamber, with the Earls of Essex and Wiltshire, and other noblemen, in the disguises of Robin Hood and his men; being attired in short coats of Kentish kendall, with hoods and hose of the same, and bearing bows and arrows, swords and bucklers, in imitation of the celebrated outlaws. "Whereat the queen," says the chronicler, "and ladies, and all others there were abashed, as well for the strange sight, as also for their sudden coming, and after certain strange pastimes and dances made, they departed." *

At Shrovetide, which, on account of its preceding a season of mortification, was always a period of festivity in times of Catholicism, the foreign ambassadors and the court were invited to partake of a "goodly banquet" in the parliament chamber at Westminster. The king, after conducting the queen to her throne, and having saluted his visitors, suddenly disappeared, but soon returned, with the Earl of Essex, dressed after the Turkish fashion, followed by the Earl of Wiltshire and Lord

* *Holinshed*, p. 554.

Fitzwater, in the costume of Russia, "with furred hats of graie, each of them having a hatchet in their hands, and boots with pikes turned up." Next came Sir Edward Howard and Sir Thomas Parre, after the fashion of Prussia, followed by torch-bearers with black faces, who were intended to represent Moors. After the mummers had exhibited themselves for some time, they resumed their usual dress, and the banquet was concluded.

Then began the dancing, an amusement in which the proficiency of Henry has been more frequently commended than that of any of our monarchs;* but on this occasion it was not long graced by his presence. Again he suddenly withdrew himself, and again entered

* The most celebrated dances in the time of Henry the Eighth were the brawl, the pavin or pavan, the measure, and the canary dance. The brawl generally opened a ball; and was performed by several persons joining hands in a circle, and giving each other continual shakes, the steps changing with the tune. The pavin, from *pavo* a peacock, so called from its resembling the movements of that bird, was a grave and majestic dance, generally performed by gentlemen with a cap and sword, and by ladies in gowns with long trains. The measure, as Shakespeare has described it, was also "full of state and ancientry," and was practised by some of the gravest characters of the time; this must have resembled in part the minuet. The canary, as its name denotes, was more lively than either of the two former dances. Besides these there were corantoes, jigs, lavoltos, fancies, and galliards. *Drake's Shakespeare, and his Times*, vol. ii. p. 176.

in disguise among a band of gentlemen, attired like them, in suits of blue and crimson, "powdered" with "castles and sheafes of arrows, of fine ducket gold." After this company entered six ladies walking in pairs, and each pair dressed alike: the first after the antique costume; the second as Egyptians, with letters and characters of gold upon their garments; the third and last pair were covered with a sort of black crape, called Lumbardines, which gave them the sombre aspect of Moors. Under this last disguise, however, was concealed one of the most celebrated beauties of her time, the Princess Mary, sister to the king; the Lady Bullen, mother of the celebrated Anne Bullen, is supposed to have been the other.* After the dancing was concluded, the king and the rest of the assembly departed, separating, as was the custom, early in the afternoon.

The king next displayed to the ambassadors his dexterity in the exercise of running, or tilting at the ring. This amusement, which became so fashionable as to be afterwards reduced to a science, consisted in riding at full speed towards the ring, which was suspended from a post, and in thrusting the lance through the ring, which was supported in a sheath, but which might readily be detached by means of the lance,

* *Holinshed*, p. 556.

and borne away on its point. Three courses were allowed to each candidate, and he who struck the lance most frequently through the ring, was considered as the victor.* Henry, being apprised that wagers were laid, and a match formed for two parties in this amusement, offered to be one of the parties, with six companions. The ambassadors, some of whom had never seen the king in armour, expressed a wish to see the trial of skill, and were accordingly invited to be present. The dress of Henry, on this occasion, was so splendid, that the foreigners could with difficulty believe that the ornaments upon his garments were of real gold; upon which he desired them to satisfy their curiosity, by detaching some of the badges and devices on his trappings, which, upon examination, they found to be of pure gold. He was accompanied by a gallant band of young noblemen, all richly clad and well mounted; while their antagonists were also "pleasant to behold, being apparelled in cloth of gold," powdered with roses. † So the courses were began, the king, as usual, excelling all his competitors. Every man ran twelve times, but five times did Henry bear away the ring, and twice did he strike it. The ambassadors declared their satisfaction at this spectacle,

* *Strutt's Sports and Pastimes*, p. 113.

† *Hollinshed*, p. 556.

and doubtless the young and aspiring monarch was gratified by their admiration.*

It is to these diversions that the popularity of Henry, not only in the early part of his reign, but during the course of his life, may probably be attributed. He lived among his people, shared in their pastimes, and was familiar with their ancient and most simple customs. We find him one day displaying the splendour of his court, and the flower of his nobility, before foreign ambassadors; the next, "not willing to be idle, his grace being young," rising early in the morning, to fetch May, or hawthorn boughs; "his grace being richly apparelled," his knights, squires, and gentlemen attending clothed in white satin, his yeomen and guard in white sarcenet: in this manner went every man with his bows and arrows shooting to the wood, and in similar guise repaired again to the court, each person with a green bough in his cap. This observance of the calends of May, now almost obliterated, was then strictly attended by all classes, who decorated the churches and houses with boughs and flowers, gathered from some neighbouring wood. "On May-day, in the morning, every man (except impediment) would walke into the sweete meadowes and greene woodes, there to rejoice his spirits

* *Holinshed*, p. 556.

with the beauty and savour of sweete flowers, and with the harmony of birds, praysing God in their kinde."* The citizens of London were not then, as now, debarred from all rural amusements by the extent of the metropolis: they could readily extricate themselves from the noisome confinement of streets, and enjoy the delights of a May morning, rendered still more exhilarating by the change from tumult to peace, from business, to country enjoyments. In some instances, several parishes united to fetch in their May-poles; and, electing a lord and lady of the May to preside over their games, they passed the remainder of the day in dancing, archery and other pastimes; and when evening closed in, they lighted bonfires, and acted plays.

From Greenwich, which, before Henry became possessed of Hampton Court, was a favourite residence, he removed to Windsor, as the first stage of his progress; and here he passed his time in shooting, dancing, wrestling, casting the bar, and in playing upon the recorders, the virginals, and the flute; in setting songs, and in making ballads: and so great was his proficiency in music, that he composed two entire masses, in five parts, which were frequently used in his

* *Stowe's Survey of London*, p. 80.

chapel and elsewhere.* The king next proceeded to Oaking, where jousts and tournaments were held in honour of his visit; the rest of his progress was passed in hunting, hawking and shooting. On his return to the metropolis, policy, as well as inclination, induced him to attend the mustering of the city guard, which which was then annually assembled on the vigil of Saint John the Baptist.† That day was always appropriated to public rejoicings. Early in the morning the citizens decorated their doors with "green birch, long fennel, orpin, Saint John's-wort, white lilies, and such like, garnished upon with garlands and beautiful flowers;" while at night they illuminated the houses with hundreds of lamps, burning all night, suspended upon branches of iron curiously wrought.‡

* *Hollingshed*, p. 557.

According to Walpole (see *Royal and Noble Authors, Life of Henry the Eighth*) a motet and an anthem, still used in some choirs, one of which, from its want of merit, does not deserve any dispute as to its origin; the other is said to exceed the capacity of a royal musician.

† It was afterwards deemed necessary to forbid this spectacle, on account of the heavy expences attending it. After a discontinuance of some years, it was revived during the reign of Edward the Sixth, in the mayoralty of Sir Thomas Gresham, for one year only. See *Hall* and *Holinshed*.

‡ The custom of leaping over bonfires, practised upon this occasion, not only by young and lively persons, but by the grave and religious, is supposed to have been in allusion to

These signals of approaching festivities were succeeded, on the ensuing day, by the mustering of the watch. Henry had privately visited the city on the evening before, disguised as one of his own guard, probably to enjoy the mirthful scene without the incumbrances of state and pomp; or, perhaps, in order to ascertain, from his own observation, that no scene of riot was likely to ensue in that part of the metropolis, then frequently disturbed by tumults. In the ensuing day, the king and queen went together in state to the King's Head in Cheapside, where they awaited the mustering of the watch. This muster of the civil power consisted of a standing watch, levied from each ward, and of a marching watch to the number of two thousand, formed chiefly of old soldiers; these men were clad in white fustian, bearing the city arms embroidered on their clothes, and were commanded by a regular array of officers. Seven

the ancient ordeal. It must have produced a ludicrous effect. Watches were instituted in England by Henry the Third. *Stowe's Survey of London.*

There were many superstitions connected with Saint John's eve; among others, that the fern seed became visible only on Saint John's eve, and at the precise moment of the birth of the saint. The fern seed was supposed not only to convey the power of invisibility at pleasure, but also to assist in the fabrications of charms, &c. *Drake's Shakespeare and his Times*, vol. i. p. 331.

The nightly vigils on saint's days were enlivened by bonfires, and by tables set with refreshments. *Stowe*, p. 159.

hundred cresset bearers attended the procession, each cresset being carried by one man, and another appointed to attend and supply it with oil. Then followed morrice dancers, each attended by a hencheman*, with a chain of gold around his neck: pageants, the usual accompaniment of processions, were also carried along with the splendid train; next followed the waytes of the city, the officers of the mayor, the mayor on horseback, with his giants and pageants; then the sheriff's watch, with his giants and pageants. A body of constables, two hundred and forty in number, all that the city required in those days, closed the procession.

Henry and his queen were much pleased by this display; and for several years resorted to the King's Head, to view the spectacle. †. In the month of October they removed to Greenwich; where the king, desirous of promoting martial exercises among the younger courtiers, caused a place to be prepared in the park for the queen and ladies to see a fight with battle-axes, in

* The henchemen, or children of honour, were the sons of gentlemen, and walked in all public processions near the person of the monarch. The word is said to be derived from the german word *heins-man*, signifying servant; hence the word hind. Dr. Percy has conjectured it, with little probability, to originate from the custom of standing by the side or haunch of the master. *Lodge's Illustrations of Eng. Hist.* vol. i. p. 358. note.

† See *Hollinshed.*

which he personally engaged, and fought with one Giot, a German, who was a man of great bodily strength, and so formidable an opponent, that he struck Sir Edward Howard to the ground. As the combatants came into closer contact in this species of contest than in the jousts, the king, desirous of effacing any impressions of ill-will between those who fought on this occasion, ordered two hundred marks of gold to be distributed among them, in order that they might conclude their warfare with a banquet. This they did; and after enjoying themselves together at Fishmongers-hall, they went by torch-light to the Tower, where Henry and his queen slept that night, and presented themselves, dressed after the manner of Germany, before the royal pair, who expressed great pleasure at the visit.

Such were some of the amusements with which the first years of this reign were varied. The succession of one pleasure to another was too rapid; and, while it prevented the king from devoting sufficient attention to matters of state, wasted the contents of the royal coffers: but, at the same time, these diversions benefited trade, improved the military strength of the people, and rendered Henry so much beloved among them, that he never lost the hold which he thus acquired upon the affections of his country. Nor had these pastimes the character of dis-

sipation; since they consisted either of rural or athletic sports, and were not indebted for their attraction to the influence of passion, or of sense. They were besides almost invariably sanctioned by the presence of the queen; who, whatever of moroseness and of melancholy may afterwards have been laid to her charge, appears not to have displayed those defects in the early days of her marriage with Henry. Pleasure was not, however, long to retain its ascendancy over business; and the mind of the king soon became occupied by concerns of a serious nature.

CHAP. III.

Dissensions in the Council. — The treasures dissipated. — Fox introduces Wolsey. — Wolsey's early life and character. — The situation of Henry the Eighth with respect to the other monarchs of Europe. — With respect to Scotland. — To France. — To Arragon. — To the Papal See. — Motives for a war with France. — Discussions in the Council. — The king determines to make war upon France in person. — Wolsey appointed victualler. — Parliament summoned. — Death of Julius II. *— Leo* X. *sends a holy bark to England. — Threatens James* IV. *with excommunication. — Henry obtains a poll-tax. — Levying of the troops. — The arms then used. — State of the Navy. — First operations of the fleet. — Death of Sir Edward Howard. — The king beheads John de la Pole. — Jealousy of Henry's temper concerning the succession.*

HENRY the Eighth found the crown of England, at his accession, free from any dread of domestic enemies, and unmolested by hostilities from any foreign power. It was neither likely, from his temper, or from the inclination of his people, that the nation should long continue to enjoy the advantages of that repose, which, after long warfare, had been obtained by the constant endeavours of his father, with

whom it had been a favourite saying, "that when Jesus Christ came into the world, peace was sung; and that when he went out of it, peace was sung also." Consistently with this maxim, it had been the aim of Henry the Seventh to conciliate the several princes of Europe, and to unite their interests, in some measure, with his own.

With France a peace had been concluded in 1498; which Louis the Twelfth, who then reigned over that kingdom, was by no means inclined to infringe, while the affairs of Italy continued to occupy his attention.

We have seen how anxiously the alliance between Spain and England had been sought, and by what means it was preserved, even when death had interfered to dissolve the bond. With Maximilian, Emperor of Germany, an alliance had been effected, by a treaty of marriage between Charles, the grandson of Maximilian, afterwards emperor, and Mary, the youngest daughter of Henry the Seventh, both of them children. The same reason secured, also, the friendship of Margaret, regent of the
1508. Netherlands, the daughter of Maximilian, and the wise guardian of the young Prince Charles. *

* *Lord Herbert*, p. 11.

To James the Fourth of Scotland, Henry the Seventh had given his elder daughter, Margaret, in marriage; trusting by that measure to soothe all animosities which had formerly subsisted between the two kingdoms, and to establish a peace which should only terminate with the existence of those who were connected by this union.* Margaret was not, however, of a character to acquire any influence over the mind of her husband. Imperious and violent, she was removed, when only fifteen years of age, from the protection of a father, to a foreign court, where she was chilled by a cold reception, and dismayed, subsequently, by the obvious neglect of her husband.† The natural partiality of Margaret for her own country availed but little with James the Fourth; and there were points of dispute with England, which, unfor-

* Margaret was affianced in 1500, married in 1508. She was not only unhappy, from the preference of her consort for other women, but unfortunate in losing several children soon after their birth. After her first confinement, her health suffered so much, that her husband, James the Fourth, went a pilgrimage on foot to Saint Ninian's. She afterwards paid a visit also to that shrine. *Holinshed*, p. 457.

† *Ellis's Letters on English History*, vol. i. p. 41. In which there is a letter from Margaret to her father, complaining of neglect and of the haughty conduct of Surrey, who had been deputed to convey her to the Scottish court. She adds, that the "erle was in such favour with the king that he cannott forber the company off hym no tyme off the day."

tunately for that monarch, soon led to open warfare.

The papal chair was filled, during the first years of the reign of Henry the Eighth, by Julius the Second, who entered into the warlike and political affairs of Europe with more ardour than became his sacred office. Intent upon expelling from Italy all foreigners, and especially those of the French nation, he was naturally solicitous to preserve peace with England, and, if possible, to engage her assistance in this undertaking. To entice Henry to accede to his wishes, Julius held out to him, as an
1511. inducement, the title of "Head of the League;" and the prospect of adding to that honour the appellation of "Most Christian King," never before conferred upon any of the English monarchs, but long permitted by the popes to the kings of France, from whom it was now in contemplation to remove it. To these motives were added, those devoted sentiments of respect towards the see of Rome, which Henry, at this time, professed and felt; the hope of regaining Brittany from the French; and, probably, not the least powerful argument in favour of war, the ambition experienced by the young and impetuous Henry to distinguish himself in military enterprizes. * These incentives of a personal

* In conformity with his professed zeal for religion, Henry attributed his measures wholly to his ardour for the honour of

nature, were justified too, by Henry and his ministers, upon the principle of maintaining in Europe that *balance of power* of which he considered England as the arbiter. A league was therefore concluded between Spain, the Pontiff, and England, against France. Maximilian soon afterwards entered into the same confederacy. *

While these foreign negociations were carried on, the council at home was disturbed by the contending interests of two rivals in the regard of the king. Fox, bishop of Winchester, the principal secretary and privy seal, was both able in office, and faithful in his adherence to what he considered as the true interests of his master. As a courtier, he was, however, neither sufficiently pliable in his conduct, nor profuse in his notions of expenditure, to please the king, who, nevertheless, valued his probity, and earnestly desired to retain his services. The Earl of Surrey, lord treasurer, was an adviser of a far more agreeable temper than Fox,

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the papacy. In a letter to Sir David Owen, a Welsh knight, whom the king required to attend him into France with "three score archers, and thirty bills on foot," he expresses himself thus: "that it was according to his duty to God, and to the church; that for God's quarrel, as well as for recovering his own right, he would pursue and continue the said war." *Strype's Memorials*, vol. i. p. 6.

* The agent that Julius employed in securing the alliance of Henry was Bambridge, archbishop of York, whom he rewarded with a cardinal's hat. *Herbert*, p. 17.

because he considered more his own security in the royal favour than the real benefit of the state. Fox had beheld and had shared the exertions which Henry the Seventh had used in amassing the treasures which the young king expended on amusements; and, foreseeing future embarrassments from present improvidence, he grieved at every fresh instance of profusion. Surrey had also, during the life of the late monarch, conformed to his notions of rigid economy, and had even extended them to penuriousness; but now the state of affairs was changed, and he knew too well the disposition of the young prince vainly to contend against his desires. Hence frequent quarrels arose between characters so different, and frequently was the mediation of the king required to adjust their disputes. In one thing only they agreed; for some time both were equally solicitous to prevent any other person from obtaining an ascendancy in the favour of Henry; until Fox, at length, perceiving that his influence was rapidly diminishing, determined to employ in his cause the powers of a mind of far superior vigour to his own.

The reign which we are now discussing, was certainly a period in which low birth was scarcely an impediment to the elevation of any aspiring character. The numerous foibles in the disposi-

tion of Henry rendered him almost the sport of any designing man who had skill to penetrate and art to play upon his various humours. Such was Thomas Wolsey, whom Fox now called in aid to his declining power; and whose career is so remarkable an exemplification of the effects of mental power, assisted by causes apparently trifling, that his origin and progress in life deserve the minutest attention and research.

The father of Thomas Wolsey, a burgess of Ipswich, appears to have possessed both the means and the desire of bestowing a good education upon his son.* In consequence of the abilities which Wolsey when a boy displayed, he was sent to the university of Oxford at so early a period, that he obtained the appellation of the boy bachelor, not being more than fifteen years of age when he was made bachelor of arts.* He next obtained a fellowship of Magdalen College; and, continuing to reside

* There is some reason to believe that Wolsey's father may have been a butcher, because the sarcasms frequently cast upon him all bore upon the meanness of that occupation. Cavendish describes him as an "honest poore man's son," p. 32. Fiddes discredits the notion of his being a butcher's son, and proves, by the father's will, that he was a man of some opulence. (See *Fiddes Collect.* p. 1.) Lord Herbert, however, speaks of him first as a man of *mean* birth (p. 32,) and afterwards as the son of a butcher (p. 35, *quoted from Polydore Virgil.*)

Wolsey was born, it is said, 1471. Parish registers were not instituted till 1535.

there, he was entrusted with the tuition of the three sons of the Marquis of Dorset. In this capacity he was invited to accompany his pupils home, to partake of the Christmas festivities. On the return of the youths to the paternal roof, they were found to have attained so great a proficiency in their studies, that their father, from gratitude, presented Wolsey with the living of Lymington in Hampshire.*

1500. Here a memorable circumstance occurred; and the future chancellor of England was set in the stocks by Sir Amyas Pawlet, a neighbouring magistrate, upon some offence which is not specified.†

Some time afterwards Wolsey quitted Lymington in order to become chaplain to Dean, archbishop of Canterbury. The death of that prelate threw him back upon his own exertions;

* *Fiddes's Life of Wolsey*, p. 5.

† This degradation was not forgotten by Wolsey; for when the schoolmaster became chancellor, he sent for Mr. Pawlet, and after severely reprimanding him with "many sharp and heinous words," ordered him not to depart out of London without permission. In consequence of this Sir Amyas continued at his house in the Middle Temple, (the Gate House next the street) for five or six years. However, the imprisoned knight employed himself in renewing the outside of his house, which he ornamented with the cardinal's arms and hat, his cognizances, and other devices, by which he thought to appease the chancellor. *Cavendish's Life of Wolsey. Wordsworth's Eccl. Biog.* vol. i. p. 327.

but Fortune, determined upon his elevation, again introduced him to a patron in the
1501. person of Sir John Nafant, then treasurer of Calais, who appointed him his chaplain. Sir John, being very old, was glad to devolve upon Wolsey the whole burden of his office; and the diligence and fidelity which Wolsey displayed obtained a recommendation from Sir John, to Henry the Seventh, who preferred him to be one of his chaplains. In this situation, "having once cast anchor in the port of promotion," Wolsey laid the foundation of his future greatness. He had an opportunity, not only of recommending himself to the favour of his sovereign, but of studying the human mind under the influence of outward splendour, and of the dangerous possession of power: his early life had given him an insight into the passions and motives of men in an humble station: his present intercourse with princes and nobles completed his knowledge of character under a different aspect, and afforded him a clue by which to guide his conduct in the various relations in which he was afterwards placed.

The first endeavour of Wolsey was to ingratiate himself with the confidential advisers of the king, especially with Fox, bishop of Winchester, and with Sir Thomas Lovell, master of the wards, and constable of the Tower, "a

very sage counsellor and a witty man." * By their recommendation, Wolsey was entrusted with the commission of conveying a dispatch from the English monarch to the Emperor Maximilian, concerning a treaty of marriage with Margaret dutchess of Savoy. This affair he managed with so much celerity, that on his return the king reproached him with remissness in not having set out upon his journey; upon which Wolsey presented him with the reply of the emperor, and with his letter of credence. The king, pleased and surprised both with the expedition and the discretion of his new ambassador, appointed Wolsey his almoner, and gave him, also, as a reward for his services, the deanery of Lincoln, then the most valuable church benefice under a bishoprick. But al-
1508. though thus promoted, it is not probable that even the abilities of Wolsey would have elevated him to the distinction which he afterwards attained, had Henry the Seventh continued to reign. Prudent and distrustful, that monarch would never have raised a subject to the degree of power which it became the lot

* *Cavendish — Wordsworth,* vol. i. p. 328.

Wolsey retained both of these friends. Fox, in his last letter, displayed towards Wolsey a degree of friendship which was interrupted, but not destroyed, by court cabals. Lovell left Wolsey in his will "a standing cup of gold, and a hundred marks." Cavendish., edited by Singer, p. 9.

of Wolsey to enjoy. Fortunately for the young statesman, the king died; and Wolsey soon discovered in his son one with whom his own schemes for attaining greatness were much more likely to prosper. It was not long before Wolsey found various opportunities of introducing himself to the favour of the young king, with whom, from his situation of almoner, he was enabled occasionally to confer.* It was at this time that the animosities existing between Fox and the Earl of Surrey, after frequent explosions into open hostility, appeared likely to end in the disgust and mortification of the bishop, and in the triumph of his rival.

The abilities of Wolsey were sufficiently apparent to shew that he might be an effectual ally to either party. Fox, desirous of attaching to his interests a man of consummate address and of insinuating manners, lost no opportunity of introducing him to the observation of the king; and hoping to diminish the ascendancy of Surrey, he procured Wolsey a seat in the privy council. Possessed of this privilege, Wolsey displayed so much eloquence and sagacity, that the king soon manifested a greater degree of attention

* According to Grove, Henry, when only seventeen years of age, was intimately acquainted with Wolsey, and delighted in his society. See *Grove's Life of Wolsey*, p. 378. Cavendish, although very minute in his details, does not specify when the influence of Wolsey was first acquired.

to his opinions than to those of graver and more experienced advisers. Wolsey, encouraged by the approbation of the king, took especial care to improve it into a decided regard, by advancing whatever he conceived would be most agreeable to Henry, knowing well the right course to promotion. Perceiving the aversion of his young master to business, Wolsey persuaded him to leave all importunate concerns to his management, and to give up his time to those amusements in which he delighted, assuring the king that no decisions should be passed in the council, but such as he knew to be desired by him. To this apparent complaisance of temper, Wolsey added advantages almost sufficient in themselves to have prepossessed Henry in his favour. He was at that period of life, being at this time thirty-seven years of age, when men have usually acquired experience and caution, without ceasing to possess the more attractive qualities of youth: he had a natural gift of eloquence, guided by discrimination, so that he could adapt his conversation, with singular facility, to the various humours of those with whom he conversed.* Neither was he restrained by any religious scruples from partaking of

* To these advantages Wolsey is said to have added that of a fine person. See *Grove's Life of Wolsey*, p. 370. His pictures represent him as portly, but of an ordinary countenance. Cavendish is silent on this point.

pleasures, which decorum might deem improper in one of his sacred functions. With the gallants of the court, he laughed, sang, and jested; and his house soon became the scene of festivities and splendour.* Yet, amidst the gaieties of polite society, Wolsey forgot not to introduce discussions of such a nature as to impress the king with an opinion of his learning and sagacity; and so successful was he, that he now "began to rule them that before ruled him:" "who was now in high favour but Mr. Almoner? who had all the sute but Mr. Almoner? and who ruled all under the king but Mr. Almoner?"† The influence of Wolsey was thus increasing, when war was declared against France; and Henry, stimulated by a violent ardour for military fame, and flattered by the proposal of Maximilian to enter the English service as a private soldier, determined to invade the neighbouring kingdom in person.

In the mean time a parliament was held, on the fourth of February, when Warham, arch-
1512. bishop of Canterbury, preached on the text, "Righteousness and peace have

* *Cavendish — Wordsworth*, vol. i. p. 335. The king gave him the house which Empson had possessed at Bridewell, in Fleet street: a residence worthy of a prince, for in the patent twelve gardens and an orchard are mentioned as belonging to it. *Singer's Cavendish*, p. 17.

† *Cavendish's Life of Wolsey*, p. 336.

kissed one another;" a proposition which occupied him an hour and a half to explain, and to declare "how justice should be administered, and peace cherished, and how justice should be laid by, and peace turned into war, which he proved, by instances in the Old and New Testament, to the great edification and comfort of his hearers," who were all, with the king at their head, impatient for war. * On the eighth day of the month, Sir Robert Sheffield, some time recorder of London, was chosen speaker; and the parliament proceeding to business, granted the king a subsidy of two fifteenths from the temporalty, and of two tenths, from the clergy.

The preparations for war were now pushed with increased vigour. The king, disgusted with the artifices of Ferdinand, had resolved to pursue his own schemes in unison with Germany, independent of the treacherous Spaniard, who had vainly endeavoured to entangle one of his generals to assist in his designs upon Navarre, instead of promoting the interests of the alliance. The death of Pope Julius the Second caused no alteration in the views of the papal see. This prince, who died of excessive joy on learning that Italy was completely evacuated by the French, was succeeded by the celebrated Cardinal di Medici, better known as Leo the Tenth, the youngest pontiff that had ascended the

* *Stow's Chronicle*, p. 491.

papal chair, having only attained the age of thirty-seven. One of his first acts was to encourage Henry's designed invasion of France, by dispatching a holy bark, laden with presents, to England. That boat sailing up the Thames with holy triumph, gave to the approaching expedition the air of a crusade, and presented to the young monarch not only indulgencies and Agnus Dei, but the less spiritual gifts of hams, sausages, and of choice wines. * Still more effectually to assure Henry of his regard for the interests of his kingdom, Leo threatened with the penalty of excommunication James the Fourth of Scotland, should he be rash enough to break that treaty with England which had been formed in the preceding reign, and renewed on the accession of Henry the Eighth. Indulgencies also were granted to all who should lend their aid to the confederacy against Lewis. Degrading, indeed, is it to religion, which expresses in one word all that is peaceful, just, and pure, that her holy name should be lent to sanction the vanities and jarring interests of the world, the machinations of priests, and the intriguing policy of statesmen.

James, privately in league with France, and irritated at the capture of some Scottish pirate ships, appeared little intimidated by these pro-

* See *Andrew's Hist. Gt. Britain*, vol. i. Reign of Henry the Eighth.

ceedings, and positively refused an acknowledgment of neutrality. In consequence of this hostile proceeding, Henry dispatched the Earl of Surrey into Yorkshire, with an adequate number of troops, to be in readiness in case of an invasion by the Scots.

As the most effectual means of expediting the levies which were necessary for the war, Henry summoned a Parliament, and obtained a poll-tax, contributed by each individual, according to his degree: a duke was required to pay ten pounds, an earl five, a baron four pounds, a knight four marks, and a proportionate sum was exacted from every individual who had forty shillings in wages. Assisted by these subsidies, for his treasures had been largely disbursed by his home expenditure, Henry proceeded to levy troops for the expedition, and to select the youngest, bravest, and richest of the nobility to attend his military career. These vied with one another in the costliness of their accoutrements and retinues; and long experienced inconveniences from the expences which they incurred. Many of the poorer officers, among whom were men of rank and of ancient families, were obliged to borrow money from the king, in order to make a suitable appearance. Among these necessitous warriors was Charles Brandon,

Nov. 1512.

who afterwards retired in disgust from the court, because Wolsey refused, in the name of his master, to cancel the debt.

As the use of fire-arms had not yet become general, and as the soldiers, therefore, were unaccustomed to wield them, the chief strength of an army consisted in the archers, who were supplied by the nobility on contract. These troops were rendered more efficacious by halberds, which they stuck into the ground as a resource when all their arrows should be expended, and with which they could resist the attacks of cavalry.* Hand-guns, managed like swivels, had been occasionally used, but had proved clumsy and troublesome, and the tremendous cannon was neither generally known, nor in frequent use; war, therefore, happily for mankind, was often impeded in its manœuvres by the deficiency of those desolating agents which now expedite its progress.† The personal bravery of each individual was, therefore, more requisite, and greater than in the present day; but the oppor-

* Muskets were not generally used until 1521, although gunpowder became known in Europe nearly 200 years before that period. See *Lord Herbert*, p. 10, from *du Bellai*. The first mention of gunpowder is in a work of Albertus Magnus, who died in 1280. *Beckman's Hist. of Inventions*, vol. iii. p. 569.

† The first cannon foundry was established in England in 1535. A similar institution had been previously attempted in Scotland. See *Henry's Hist. England*.

tunities which were sometimes afforded of meeting in single combat an object of rivalship or of hatred, while they increased the stimulus of valour, added to it that of private animosity and revenge.

Forces were raised by commissions of array, by which the best troops were selected, and ranked according to their arms and condition. The weapons were appointed by an assize of arms, and the different chieftains, who usually supplied from their own vassals a considerable portion of the army, were denoted by badges and mottoes; nor was it unusual to distinguish among these the retinues of bishops and other dignitaries of the church, who deemed that temporal warfare was allowed to them, as well as the spiritual contests which they were supposed to hold.

Henry did not neglect to strengthen and to improve all the castles and strong holds on the coasts, and to place in them sufficient garrisons for their defence. The garrisons of Calais and of Berwick were amply supplied with the materials for the manufacture of gunpowder, which, in all probability, was usually made by the principal garrisons in England and its territories at this period.* The next care of the king was to increase his naval forces, which, in the course of

* See the *Shrewsbury Papers.* — *Lodge's Illustrations of Hist.* vol. i. p. 3. Also note in p. 3.

his reign, attained much more importance and value than formerly. The discovery of the new world, in the preceding century, had induced Henry the Seventh to build ships of a larger size than had been hitherto considered essential, and to lend them for distant voyages to merchants, when they were not engaged on public service.

Henry the Eighth even exceeded his father in his endeavours to acquire maritime superiority, and the largest ship that had been seen was first used in the war with France; it was called the Regent, in compliment to Queen Katharine, and required eight hundred men as a crew. * His naval operations were, however, at first unsuccessful. The king, anxious to see his navy collected, went to Portsmouth,
1513. and there appointed Sir Thomas Knevet and Sir John Carew captains of the Regent; nominating, at the same time, Sir Charles Brandon and Sir Henry Guilforde captains of another large ship, called the Sovereign. After this, he presided at a magnificent banquet, which he gave to the commanders; and so greatly had his presence and encouragement animated these brave men, that they swore to him and to each other, to "defend, aid, and comfort each other, without failing." The ships of the line amounted to the

* See *Henry's Hist. England*, vol. xii. p. 243.

number of twenty-five, inferior in number, by four, to the enemy; of great burden, however, and well manned and provided.

The first operations of the navy were inauspicious: the Regent having grappled with a large vessel called the Cordelier, off Brest, and nearly subdued the crew, a French gunner set fire to the gunpowder in his own ship, and both these noble gallies were consumed.* On the part of England, the loss was repaired by the construction of the Henry Grace de Dieu, which was immediately begun; while Louis endea-

* The maritime ascendancy of England manifested itself, on this occasion, both in comparison with the navies of France and of Scotland. While Henry was visiting his ships, James was making preparations to send forth the only fleet that Scotland has ever equipped; West, bishop of Ely, who had been dispatched to Edinburgh to make a last attempt to detach James from the French interests, gives an account of the naval forces there, which was calculated to afford Henry considerable satisfaction in his own decided superiority. "I found," says the bishop "at Leyth, none but nine or ten small topmen, amongst whome the ship of Lynne was the byggest, and other small balyngiers and crayers, and never one of thies was rigged to the werr, but one little topman of the burden of thre score. And from thens I went to the new haven, and ther lyeth the Margaret, a ship nigh of the burden of the Cryst of Lynne, and many men workying upon her, some setting on her mayn top, and som calkyng her above water, for under water she was new talowed. Ther was also upon the stocks a litell galley in makyng, about fyfty fote long, as I suppose, which they said the kyng made to rowe up and downe the water to and from Strivilynge." *Ellis's Letters*, vol. i. p. 68.

voured to replace his misfortune by engaging in his maritime service a knight of Rhodes, commonly called Prior John, or Pregeant, who, commanded three gallies in the Mediterranean. But Henry experienced a much more vexatious disaster in the course of this year. The brave Sir Edward Howard, lord admiral, succeeded in blocking up the French fleet, with Pregeant at its head, in the harbour of Brest, so that they lay as prisoners in a dungeon, unable to move, or to make any reprisal. Sir Edward, jealous of his sovereign's fame, and imagining that no subject ought to deprive his master of so glorious an enterprize as a victory over the whole French fleet, wrote to the king, requesting that he would take the command of his squadron. The reply of Henry was severe, and implied a reproof for a supposed secession from duty. The admiral, stung with this suspicion, entered the bay in a small rowing boat, boarded the French admiral's ship, and drove the crew before him. Unfortunately the bay was very shallow, and the tide being low, the English vessels were unable to follow, and to assist their commander. It is uncertain whether the cables of his boat were cut, or whether the retreating tide carried it away; but it fell off; and Sir Edward was left in the hands of his enemies. His men beheld him, with the action of a

despairing, but not vanquished hero, snatch from his neck his whistle, then the badge which designated his station, and cast it into the sea: he was borne down by the pikes of the foe, too much incensed to be arrested in their butchery by the valour or by the rank of the victim. His title of admiral was conferred upon his elder brother, Lord Thomas Howard, with an injunction from the king to avenge the death of his brother. Lord Thomas did not disgrace his celebrated name and station; he was successful in repulsing the French from the coast of Sussex, and in clearing the seas of their ships, preparatory to the passage of the king and of the troops to Calais.*

The final proceedings of Henry, previous to quitting his native country, proclaimed how much more he possessed of the jealous and arbitrary spirit of his father, than of the frank and generous temper for which his people at this time gave him credit. Edmund de la Pole, son of John de la Pole, Duke of Suffolk, by Elizabeth, sister of Edward the Fourth, had been imprisoned, during many years, by the late king, who dreaded him, partly on account of his relationship to the house of York, and partly from the turbulent and restless spirit which he evinced.

* *Hall.* 4th year of Henry the Eighth, p. 567. *Herbert*, p. 31.

Without any legal cause, this unhappy man had been committed to the Tower; and without any additional reason, except a suspicion of having maintained some correspondence with his brother* Richard de la Pole, who was engaged in the service of France, he was now, by the advice of the council, brought forth, to receive the sentence and punishment of death. This act of tyranny was the first indication of that jealousy of all who could, in any degree, pretend to the crown, which, in succeeding years, proved a source of continual irritation to Henry, and of much bloodshed to his people.

Henry was now impatient to reach the scene of action, although not seconded by any of the other allies, who probably never intended to comply with the engagements they had promised to fulfil, and who rejoiced at their superior address in throwing the burden of the war upon a rich and powerful prince, who had not sufficient cunning in his own nature to perceive the duplicity of others. Leo the Tenth had not the means requisite to second his promises. Ferdinand, who gloried in the perfection of falsehood and dissimulation, until his perverted mind cherished those baleful qualities as if they constituted the blessing instead of the curse

* Rich. de la Pole, commonly called the White Rose, was slain in the battle of Pavia. *Stowe's Chronicles*, p. 492.

of society, was now discovered to have maintained a secret treaty with France for nearly a year, and to have formed it almost on the very day that he had, in another place, signed a league against Lewis. Maximilian, unable to raise forces from his own poverty, could only flatter the pride of Henry with the empty honour of receiving an emperor into his pay as a volunteer. But Henry was not of an age nor a temper to be easily dismayed by these discouraging circumstances. His vanguard, which had reached Calais about the middle of May, had been followed by six thousand men, under the command of Lord Herbert of Gower, an officer of much valour and conduct, who, joining the troops already landed, proceeded to Therouenne, which they invested conjointly on the 22d of July. Here a council of war was held in the tent of Lord Herbert; but during their deliberations a shot from the enemy, which was probably intended for Lord Herbert, killed Lord Carew, who was present. The council were so much dismayed by this occurrence, that they could not resume the subject of consultation; but Lord Herbert, instantly recovering his surprise, said to them—"This is but the chance of war; if it had hit me, you must have been content; a noble heart in war is never afraid of death." This brave example reassured

the officers, and they continued their consultations.*

No accident occurred to retard the departure of the king. The queen had been appointed regent, and was empowered, with the advice of five noblemen, to raise money upon loan, if required; especially if more troops were to be levied. She accompanied the king to Dover castle, where he bade her an affectionate farewell, and whence she beheld him set sail for the shores of France in a superb vessel, the sails of which were of cloth of gold. The words of Henry to Surrey, on their parting, were almost prophetic: "My lords, I trust not the Scots, therefore I pray you be not negligent." Brandon had been retained in order to be near his sovereign, whose intimacy with this youthful friend and with other courtiers, subjected him to frequent imputations of derelictions from royal state and dignity. Wolsey, who was appointed victualler to the army, had to encounter many illiberal sarcasms on the suitableness of his office to his origin: he attended Henry as his almoner †; and, under very different circumstances to those in which he had formerly visited Calais, then an adventurer and thankful for a casual office in the treasury of that city, he approached in triumph the scene of his early probation.

* *Holinshed*, 578. † *Herbert*, p. 35.

The troops, which were transported to France, amounted to eleven thousand. Brandon, lately created Lord Lisle, commanded the vanguard; Henry Bourchier*, Earl of Essex, was lieutenant of the spears; and Sir John Pechie, master of the horse. The king was attended also by the proud and aspiring Edward Stafford, Duke of Buckingham, who was followed by six hundred retainers, and whose splendour and pomp almost exceeded that of the monarch. The duke claimed, from his office of constable of England, to march at the right hand of the royal retinue: Sir Edward Poynings, comptroller of the household, took his place on the left side.

The British army was received in the harbour of Calais by so vigorous a discharge from the fort, that the *feu de joie* was said to have been heard at Dover. Those culprits whose offences had merited the punishment of exile, were allowed to return to the English dominions, on the entrance of the king into the town; an act of mercy which seemed inconsistent with the useless devastation which was soon to ensue. Here Henry

* Henry Lovaine and Bourchier, formerly Bowser, of an ancient family, which attained that surname, and also the armorial bearing of an infidel's head, from the victory obtained over a pagan king by one of their ancestors. This Henry Bourchier broke his neck by a fall from his horse in 1539. "His horse was young," says Stowe, "and he the oldest earl in England." *Weaver*, p. 629.

began his military career; and his repose on the night after his landing, was disturbed by the first sounds of war that had ever broken his slumbers, produced by a fruitless attempt of the enemy upon the town, from which they were repulsed by the archers.

On the twenty-first of July, the king and his army quitted Calais, and commenced their march towards the scene of action. The troops were divided into three battalions. In the centre the king advanced, preceded by six hundred Germans; his banner was borne by Sir Henry Guildford; and he was followed by his household servants. The ordnance was placed between the divisions of the army, and consisted of twelve great pieces,* which were honoured with the names of the apostles*; besides slings, powder carts, bombs, stones, bows and arrows; and it required the attendance of one thousand nine hundred men, and of thirteen hundred carriages to effect its removal. The rear-guard was composed of the retinues of Bishop Fox and of Wolsey.

After a march which was varied by no incident of any moment, except the loss of some soldiers, who could not sustain the excessive heat of the weather, and of one piece of ordnance from the carelessness of the men, Henry encamped before Therouenne, according to the report of the

* See *Lord Herbert*, p. 36.

chronicler Hall, who was on the spot, "in most warlikewise manner; his camp was environed with artilerie, as fawcones, serpentynes, cast tragbusses, and tryde harrows, spien brystets, and other warlike defence, for the save guarde of the campe." The king and his personal attendants were commodiously lodged in a wooden tenement erected for the occasion, and a range of tents afforded accommodations for the rest of his retinue. *

The city of Therouenne was strongly fortified, and contained, besides its usual inhabitants, a garrison of six hundred cavalry and of two thousand five hundred German auxiliary troops: its walls were well supplied with ordnance, to the frequent discomfiture of the English, who, however, had made considerable progress in the siege before the arrival of the King. The chief obstacle to their proceedings had been the difficulty of obtaining provisions from Calais, without annoyance from the troops of the enemy, who were then commanded by the Duc de Vendosme, captain general of Picardy; but the bravery of the archers, who, headed by Sir Rice ap Thomas, had several smart skirmishes with the foe, had removed all obstruction to the victualling of the army.

The progress of the siege was rendered less

* *Hall*, p. 539.

tedious to Henry by an interview with Maximilian, whose neighbouring residence at Aire afforded an opportunity of a personal acquaintance between the two sovereigns. The appearance and equipage of the English king, on this occasion, were unusually superb; and the splendour of the Duke of Buckingham reflected additional lustre on his train. The emperor and his attendants were clad in deep mourning for the death of the empress, and the communication was, for the same reason, of short duration. Yet much interesting matter for reflection might be afforded to a discerning spectator, by the different circumstances, characters, talents, and deportment of the two great potentates. Henry, in the bloom of youth and health, was rich, popular at home, and respected in foreign countries; Maximilian was impoverished and needy from his improvidence and extravagance; unstable and abject from the consciousness of weakness, and with a constitution which had been debilitated by the effects of sensual indulgence, rather than of age. The English king, confident in his own superior knowledge and accomplishments, and possessing the acknowledged right to the sceptre which he swayed, was "fortunate in interviews, in which he always delighted."* The education of Maximilian had been mean

* *Herbert*, p. 633.

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and contracted, a deficiency which he sought in vain to supply by the conversation of the learned; his title to the empire of Germany had never been acknowledged by a considerable portion of Europe, since he had not been crowned by the hands of the pope: in point of fact, therefore, as King of the Romans, he was of inferior rank to his young ally. * To the fine arts, especially to poetry, both these monarchs professed devotion; and perhaps, in this respect, their abilities and advantages were more nearly equal than in other points: the efforts of their muse have alike descended into that oblivion into which posterity has adjudged them. To both fortune had been profuse, but Maximilian knew not how to profit by her favours; and, in his negociations with the other princes of Christendom, had displayed so little address, that the infraction of the treaties he had formed could not have been much more injurious to him than their fulfilment; yet was he accounted a prince expert in war, "very diligent, secret, laborious, courteous, benigne, and replenished with many other excellent gifts and ornaments." †

The interview between Henry and Maximilian was succeeded by the junction of the latter, with

* See *Lord Herbert*, p. 37. Also *Robertson's Charles the Fifth*, vol. ii. p. 61.

† *Guiccia-dini*, liber 13.

a body of men, to the English army. The emperor received the pay of a private soldier, wore the cross of Saint George, and the red rose, and assumed the station of a volunteer in the British forces *: He was, however, treated by Henry with that delicacy which is a frequent accompaniment to exalted rank, when dignified by discernment and liberality of mind; the imperial soldier was sumptuously lodged in a tent of cloth of gold, and splendidly regaled during the two days that he remained in the camp. Shortly after this interview, a herald from Scotland arrived at the English quarters, and, on being introduced into the presence of Henry, he presented him with a letter from James the Fourth. Henry, after glancing at the contents, broke out into many expressions of indignation against the Scottish king, and bade the herald bear back to him this message: "That the king of England plainly saw that James was not unworthy of his ancestors, who had never observed their promises, except when conformable to inclination. That Scotland, being a province of England, James should soon receive the punishment due to a rebellious vassal; for with God's help the king would, at his return, expel him from that realm." The herald, intimidated

* His pay was a hundred crowns per diem. *Herbert*, p. 38.

by the violence of this reply, entreated that the king would return an answer in writing, and withdrew. Henry then sent for the principal officers of the camp, and read to them the letter of the Scottish king. It contained, principally, complaints of injury done to Scottish vessels; of the encouragement afforded by Henry to one Heron, a traitor; and of the attacks made upon the Duke of Gueldres. But the most aggravating part of this epistle was, in all probability, that which touched upon some jewels, said to have been withheld from Margaret, Queen of Scotland, to whom they had been bequeathed by her father, Henry the Seventh. This injury, which had been a former subject of altercation, was never redressed.* Henry returned an answer to James full of defiance, and the Earl of Surrey received instructions to challenge the Scottish king to battle.

* *Holinshed*, p. 582.

The legacy had been already claimed by Margaret in a letter to Henry the Eighth. See *MS. Cotton. Calig.* b. vi. fol. 74. — Given in *Ellis's Letters on Eng. Hist.*, vol. i. p. 64. Mr. Ellis observes, that although no such legacy is mentioned in the will of Henry the Seventh, as given by Mr. Astle, yet, as it is mentioned in several public documents, there is no doubt but that such a bequest was made; whether supplementary to the will, or by any verbal allotment, does not appear. *Ellis's Letters*, vol. i. p. 64.

Margaret seems, from the above mentioned letter, to have regretted that the legacy was made a pretence for war; and (see another letter from *Dr. West*, p. 74.) to have remained friendly to the English, and to have regretted the part which her husband had taken. Ibid.

Meanwhile the siege of Therouenne was prosecuted with vigour; and a favourable opportunity presenting itself, of a more direct attack upon the enemy in another quarter, a party of the French, after having supplied the town with provisions, were, on their return, completely routed by the English troops. This engagement was called the "battle of Guine-
Aug. 19, 1513. gate, or of the Spurs," by the French historians, because their countrymen had used their swords but little, and their spurs chiefly, in the skirmish.* It was soon followed by the capitulation of the town,
Aug. 24. which was entered by Henry and Maximilian, the English king taking precedence. Therouenne was, nevertheless, ceded to the emperor, on account of its vicinity to his domains, and partly razed to the ground: so that the advantages derived to the English from its surrender were merely of a nominal nature.

To the inexperience of Henry, and to his deficiency in a knowledge of the art of war, may be ascribed the obvious errors of this fruitless campaign. After the siege of Therouenne, instead of boldly advancing to Paris at the head of a numerous army, he was induced, probably by the arguments of Maximilian, to proceed to

* See *Mezerai, Hist. of France,* p. 553.

Tournay, a town belonging to the French, on the borders of Flanders, and consequently a source of annoyance to the archduke Charles, grandson to the emperor, and king of the Netherlands. The journey of Henry to Tournay was agreeably interrupted by a visit of a few days at Lisle, where Margaret, Duchess of Savoy and governess of the Netherlands, the daughter of Maximilian, at that time resided. He was received with great pomp by the emperor, by the duchess, and by the Prince Charles of Castile. During this visit, a report prevailed that there had been a design to assassinate the king; but nothing was proved against various persons who were examined on this charge: nevertheless, the army was so much alarmed by the rumour, that, according to the statement of an eye-witness, "they were never merry, tyl they saw the king agayne."*

On returning to the camp, a thick fog occasioned the king and his guard to lose their way; nor could they resolve in which direction to turn, until a victualler who happened to come up at the moment put them in the right direction. So slow, however, was the march of the British troops to Tournay, that they were not stationed before that place until the twenty-second of September.

While Henry was encamped before this city, he

* *Hall.*

received intelligence of the battle of Flodden, in which James the Fourth, with many of his nobility, and about 10,000 of his troops, had fallen.

Sept. 9. The account of this memorable victory was communicated by a letter from Queen Katherine, who had received the intelligence from Lord Howard, at the moment that she was preparing for a pilgrimage to our lady of Walsingham. To the observations which were naturally suggested by the importance of this event, Katherine, in a letter to Wolsey, adds; "This matter is so marvellous, that it seemeth to be of God's doing alone: I trust the king shall remember to thank Him for it." * Her

Sept. 26. affection to Henry shines forth in these letters. She constantly terms him "my husband, my Henry:" and in her letter to Wolsey she begs that the "king will not risk his life too much; and that Wolsey will assure her that he is well." Nor was the mind of Henry so much elated by his success, as to cause him to forget the duty suggested by his queen, at the same time acknowledging the uncertainty of sublunary greatness, on which he made several comments. He likewise manifested the respect which was due to a near connection, and to the

* *Ellis's Letters*, vol. i. p. 90.

The letters published by *Mr. Ellis*, vol. i. p. 88, are very creditable to her disposition.

memory of a gallant though ill-fated monarch, by commanding the Bishop of Rochester to preach before him a funeral sermon, lamenting the catastrophe of James's death; and masses were performed, both at the camp and at Saint Paul's cathedral.* In his conduct to Scotland, Henry displayed even a more generous and magnanimous spirit than in these well-meant, but useless honours. The factions which divided that unhappy country, the youth of the heir apparent, the death of many of the nobility in the recent battle at Flodden, and the regency of his sister during the minority of her son, afforded the King an evident opportunity of obtaining absolute power over the neighbouring kingdom. But Henry was at this time incapable of a base triumph over a fallen enemy; and to the humble intreaty of Queen Margaret for peace, he returned an answer to this effect: "That if the Scots were inclined to peace, he would have peace; if for war, they would find him equally disposed to hostile measures." †

* The disposal of the body of James has been a matter of some dispute. Many of his subjects believed him to have escaped alive to Kelso, whence he resorted to Jerusalem, where he remained till his actual death. Stowe affirms that his head was buried in Saint Michael's, Wobd Street. His body is said to have been discovered in the church of the Carthusians at Shene. *Weaver*, p. 304.

† See *Lord Herbert*, p. 49.

Meanwhile the siege of Tournay proceeded; and the English troops were no sooner planted before its walls, than terror was struck into the hearts of the citizens, who, by an old privilege, had the right of defending their own city: and in a few days that town, celebrated in Cæsar's commentaries for a valiant resistance to the Romans, ingloriously surrendered to the English, and without bloodshed Henry was permitted to take quiet possession of its citadel.

20th. The inhabitants were so much ashamed of their pusillanimous conduct, that during the prohibition issued in the market-place, in the name of the King of England and France, against such as should in any way molest the vanquished, none of the inhabitants could raise their heads.* The king, who had risked his person in the siege, after rewarding several of his officers with the order of knighthood, and appointing Sir Edward Poynings governor of Tournay, occupied the remainder of his stay at this place in entertaining the Princess Margaret of Savoy, and the Prince of Castile, with tilting and banqueting. In these diversions, doubly agreeable after the hardships

* In this expedition died, of an illness incurred in the march, Sir George Manners, father of the first Earl of Rutland. *Weaver*, p. 428.

of war, Charles Brandon, now Lord Lisle, was as usual distinguished, and received many indications of favour from the Princess Margaret. Henry, far from objecting to so splendid an union for his favourite, would have been inclined to second a scheme of that nature; but the ambition of Brandon, if not his affections, had a different object. The Princess Mary, the youngest sister of the king, had for some time cherished an attachment for Brandon; and it is probable, since in the opinion of a French moralist, "no person can completely conceal a sincere and ardent passion,*" that some suspicion of Mary's partiality may have influenced Brandon; for the match seems to have been dropped, and that evidently not from any disinclination on the part of the Dutchess of Savoy. A contract of marriage, which had been formed in the preceding reign, between Mary and the Prince of Castile, might, however, appear to present a formidable obstacle to the hopes of the lovers. This engagement had been discussed by Henry and Charles at Tournay, and a promise made on the part of England that the princess should be sent over to Flanders in the ensuing spring; but the scheme was never put into execution. The Flemish referring to Ferdinand

* *De la Rochefoucault.*

for an approval of the match, that monarch evinced a determination to unite his grandson Charles to a princess of Spain or Portugal. Meanwhile the winter approached; and as no operations could be carried on during that season, the king began to look impatiently towards home; and hastening to Calais, he there took shipping, which was in readiness, had a favourable passage to Dover, and proceeded to Richmond, where Katharine awaited him, and "where," says Hall, "was such a lovyng metyng that every one rejoised."

It has been remarked as a curious circumstance, that, in Queen Katharine's regency, the most complete triumph which the English ever obtained over Scotland was acquired. Her government, however, though memorable from this event, had not been entirely free from domestic disturbances; but these being of a short duration, and proceeding chiefly from a local cause, do not form any important feature in the annals of this year. The cause of the affray was this: the towns of Islington, Hoxton, Shoreditch, and others, began to extend from the neighbourhood to the very walls of the city. The youths of the metropolis, having been accustomed to hold their pastimes in the neighbouring fields, were indignant on seeing enclosures daily encroaching upon the open spaces allotted for their

diversions: they assembled in a body; a turner in a fool's coat ran along the streets, crying out shovels and spades, and the hedges and ditches were speedily demolished. The king's council summoned the mayor of the city to Grey Friars, and reproved him for his quiet endurance of this disturbance; but, on his expostulation in behalf of the citizens and their privileges, he was merely dismissed, and the meadows were allowed to remain uninclosed.

The generals who had distinguished themselves in the wars with Scotland and France were not forgotten by the king; he had first written them letters full of commendations and thanks; and on the day of the Purification, he distributed honours, then rare and important, to his valiant servants. The Earl of Surrey was created Duke of Norfolk, a title which had been conferred on his father by Richard the Third, but which had been extinguished; and he was permitted to bear the arms of Scotland; Sir Charles Brandon, who had recently been raised to the peerage, under the title of Lord Lisle, was advanced to the dukedom of Suffolk; the lord admiral, Lord Thomas Howard, was made Earl of Surrey; and Lord Herbert, the Chamberlain, Earl of Worcester. On another day Sir Edward Stanley was created Lord Mounteagle; and, in the following March,

Thomas Wolsey was appointed to the bishopric of Tournay.

Henry had declared his intention of again pursuing hostilities in France in person, when the season should permit; but his return to England proved to be the termination of this unprofitable contest. Probably he began to perceive that his allies, and not himself, had chiefly reaped the benefit of his conquests; and the expences of the war were found to be burdensome to many of the principal nobility. Wolsey, on whom the bishopric of Tournay had been conferred, was satisfied that he had gained his share of the fruits of the French invasion, and possibly took no means to dissuade the king from peace. On the other hand, Louis was little disposed to continue hostile measures, by which a considerable portion of his territories had been ravaged, and two principal towns captured. Induced by the reiterated intreaties of his wife, Anne of Brittany, Louis had already consented to a reconciliation with the pope, even when his affairs in Italy promised him success: and the death of his queen * now afforded an opportunity of cementing any alliance with England which he might form. A treaty of marriage with the Princess Mary was promptly entered upon, and

* She died a few months after her champion and professed admirer, James the Fourth of Scotland.

concluded; and this young and beautiful woman was destined, by her union with a man three times her age, to be the offering which should propitiate the spirit of discord.

The first endeavours which the King of France made towards a reconciliation with England, were aided by the knowledge which he possessed of the treachery of Ferdinand, who was already in treaty with France, and of the wavering and selfish policy of Maximilian, whose levies were to be retarded in the ensuing campaign by his daughter, the Princess Margaret, because the emperor had other designs in view. Louis also represented that the youth of the Castilian prince rendered him an inefficient ally to Henry, and an unsuitable consort to his sister; but when he made proposals of marriage to the fair Mary, he was not so explicit concerning his own age.* Mortified by discovering how completely he had been duped, Henry concluded a treaty with Louis, in the usual terms, for the period of their joint lives, and one year after; and the union of his sister with Louis was one of the principal articles of peace. On the part of England it was agreed to restore the Duc de Longueville, and other prisoners of war, who had been taken in the late campaign; and Louis

Aug. 7, 1514.

* *Mezerai, Hist. France*, p. 554.

conciliated the suspicious temper of Henry by sending Richard de la Pole out of his kingdom, but refused to give up this persecuted man to the English. The friendship between England and France was soon afterwards confirmed by one of the most disproportionate marriages, in respect to age and constitution, that was ever made: Louis was fifty-two years of age, and was diseased, infirm, and tottering towards the brink of the grave. Mary was reputed to be one of the finest and most accomplished women of her time, and had not yet attained her seventeenth year: but, whatever her inclinations may have been, she was obliged to yield to the will of her brother, and to the interests of the state. In disposition there was a greater degree of similarity; and the conjugal attachment of Louis to his first wife augured well for his conduct to her successor. "When Anne of Brittany died," says a French historian, "her husband loved her so entirely, that his heart bowed under this affliction; he put on black for mourning, shut himself up for several days in his closet, and turned out all the fiddlers, comedians, jugglers, and buffoons from the court.*" The cheerful and easy temper of the French king presented some mitigation to the disparity of years; and the superiority of his

* See *Mezerai*, p. 554. *Hall.*

character, both in wisdom and goodness, might afford some consolation to Mary for this unequal union.* Whatever were her feelings on the occasion, the match was completed; and the young princess, having plighted her faith to the Duc de Longueville, as the proxy of Louis, and having sent also her commission for the same ceremony to be performed in France, prepared for her departure from England. Her dowry was considerable; but in the marriage articles a clause was introduced, by the caution of Wolsey, that in case of the death of the French king, she, and the money which she took with her, should be returned.† The young princess was also provided with a quantity of valuable plate, and with robes of great costliness. Henry and his queen accompanied Mary to Dover, where she was some time detained by tempestuous weather: the Duke of Norfolk, the Earl of Surry, the Marquis of Dorset, the Bishop of Durham, and several nobles of inferior rank, knights and gentlemen, among

* Louis was so benevolent towards his people, that when forced to lay subsidies upon them, he was often observed to have tears in his eyes; and when he contemplated in prospect the prodigality of Francis I. his heir, he said, sighing; "Alas! this great boy will spoil all!" *Mezerai*, p. 555.

† 60,000 crowns per annum were settled upon her by Louis, in the event of her becoming a widow. *Lord Herbert*, p. 53.

whom were Sir Thomas Bullen, father of Anne Bullen, were deputed to attend the bride elect to France. The king took an affectionate farewell of his sister, recommending her to the protection of God, and to the guidance of her husband. After a tem-
Oct. 2. pestuous voyage, she landed near Boulogne, where, after some difficulty in entering the harbour, she was received by the Duc de Vendosme *; thence she proceeded to Abbeville. At a short distance from that town, she was met by Louis, who was desirous of privately conversing with her, and of observing, undisturbed by pomp and publicity, whether her personal charms merited the reputation which they had obtained. This interview inspired Louis with the most passionate admiration of his young queen. The heir apparent of Louis, Francis de Valois, afterwards Francis the First, was deputed to welcome Mary into Abbeville, where the marriage ceremony was performed: every species of honour was shewn to her, and nothing that could add splendour to her nuptials was omitted. Yet little regard was paid to the actual comfort of the young queen; for on the day following her union with Louis,

* In this passage the great ship called the Rebeck was lost with four hundred of her company. *Stowe's Chronicle*, p. 497.

all her English attendants, with few exceptions, were discharged, and she was surrounded with foreign domestics. The distress of her former servants was great; many of them had given up advantageous situations at home; "some died by the way returning, some fell mad, but there was no remedy." * The English lords were also for the most part dismissed, after receiving ample rewards for their care of the queen: but soon afterwards, the Duc d'Angoulesme, having proclaimed a solemn jousting at Paris, to be held in honour of the approaching coronation of Mary, several of the young English nobility craved permission of their king to return to Paris. Amongst these was the Duke of Suffolk; and few historical narratives describe situations of greater interest than that of the blooming Mary, destined to relinquish an attachment so wholly justified by the merit of the individual as that which she cherished for Brandon, yet tantalized by the continued display of those accomplishments which had probably first engaged her fancy. Nor was Brandon the only individual who envied the infirm Louis the beautiful prize which so ill assorted with his age and condition; and it was suspected by wary spectators, that Francis de Valois was not unmoved by her attractions.

The nuptial festivities were conducted with

* *Holinshed*, p. 604.

a degree of magnificence unsuitable to the infirmities of the bridegroom, but which presented Mary in all the lustre that splendour can add to beauty. After being crowned at
Nov. 5. Saint Denis, the dauphin holding the massive crown over her head lest its weight should prove inconvenient, the queen entered Paris in an open chariot, covered with cloth of gold; her head and person were resplendent with jewels; and on the former she wore a coronet of pearls. She was attended by the principal nobility of the realm, and by several of the English peers, among whom was Brandon. On the following day the tournaments began; and the spectators beheld with commiseration, by the side of the young queen, the feeble Louis extended on a couch, where he was obliged to recline during the fatigues of the day; while Mary was so placed that all "men might see and wonder at her beauty." In the tilting, the English nobles displayed so much adroitness as to excite the jealousy of the French, and especially of the dauphin. On the ensuing day, Francis introduced a German, purposely to humble the Duke of Suffolk, who had manifested great prowess: but the duke made the German stagger and recede; and the judges, fearful of consequences, let fall the barrier between them. After they had finished with the spears, they

commenced fighting at the barriers; and the duke, who saw that the German was set on purposely to attack him, took him by the neck, and "pommelled" him on the head so severely, that they were again parted by the judges. * The Marquis of Dorset, who was scarcely inferior to Brandon in chivalric ardour, and who had fought bravely the day before, was almost subdued by a Frenchman.

After the tournament was finished, the English noblemen returned to their native land; and Mary was once more left amongst foreigners, with the exception of a few chosen female attendants †: among these were a sister of the Marquis of Dorset, and Anne Bullen, then very young, who had followed in the train of the queen. Mary was not, however, long obliged to restrain her passion for Brandon. The death of Louis, which occurred on the first day of the year, about three months

1515.

* *Holinshed.*

† She wrote to Henry complaining of this usage, and especially of the privation of a person whom she calls her "mother Guldeford," probably mother of the maids of honour. *Ellis's Letters*, vol. i. p. 116. It also appears that Dame Jane Guldeforde, widow of Sir Richard Guldeforde, was pensioned by Henry the Eighth, in 1514, on account of her faithful services to his father and mother, to his sisters, and to himself. This stipend, which was given with much parade, amounted only to 20*l.* per annum, worth 30*l.* in the present day. *Anderson's, Hist. Commerce*, vol. ii. p. 24.

after his marriage, enabled her to comply with her secret inclinations. Henry, on being apprised of the decease of his brother-in-law, sent commissioners into France to treat concerning a renewal of the peace. Francis the First, who succeeded Louis, was far from opposing the truce, which he had every inclination to continue: he was, in fact, sedulous in courting the good-will of Henry; and, for this purpose, he began diligently to cultivate the favour of Wolsey. But the death of Louis, although producing no immediate and visible alteration in the affairs of Europe, was an event of infinite importance to two individuals, whose story might aptly form the subject of romance. The Duke of Suffolk was one of the ambassadors from England, and carried to the widowed queen of France letters and intelligence of her absent friends. This opportunity of regaining that happiness which had been blighted by the ambition of statesmen, was not disregarded, and Mary, after a courtship of four days, was privately married to Suffolk *: she quickly re-

* Mary was advised by Wolsey, immediately after the death of Louis, not to promise herself in marriage; to which injunction she replies, "My lord, I trust the king my brother and you woll not retien me in sooche chyldhood." *Ellis's Letters*, vol. i. p. 121.

In another letter she speaks of displeasure expressed towards

vealed the secret to Francis, whose mediation with her brother she earnestly requested and obtained, although he affirmed that he had destined her, in his own mind, as a wife for the Duke of Savoy. To Henry she wrote, taking on herself all the blame of this precipitate step, towards which she declared, that she had made the first advances; and announcing, that she had resolved rather than again to unite herself with any man except the object of her affection, to retire into a convent.* Henry, after some expressions of displeasure, consented to sanction their marriage with his approbation; and he was probably induced to act thus from the opinion of Wolsey who represented that it was far more advantageous to England to receive back, as the wife of one of her nobles, the beautiful queen and her rich dower, than to bestow her on some French prince.† Nevertheless, the public opinion on

her and the duke on account of their marriage, and throws herself upon the king's clemency, p. 123.

It is uncertain whether Henry actually disapproved the marriage or not. Polydore Virgil hints that he had destined her to Brandon before her marriage with Louis. *Herbert*, 48.

* This appears from an original letter mentioned by *Lord Herbert*, p. 54.

† She brought all her jewels, and the plate and tapestries of Louis, to the value of 200,000 crowns. *Herbert*, p. 55. Among others a jewel called le Miroir de Naples, of great value.

the expediency of this match varied considerably; and notwithstanding the popularity of the duke, who, for "his wit and demeanour was in favour both with the prince and people," it was generally thought that the interests of England would have been better consulted, had she been wedded to the Prince of Castile, for whom she had been formerly destined. They lived, however, happily together until the death of the princess. Three children, a son and two daughters, were the offspring of this union.*

The return of the Duke and Dutchess of Suffolk to England was welcomed with festivities, in which, as heretofore, the king and Charles Brandon performed a distinguished part. On the first of May, the king and queen, with a train of lords and ladies, rode to Shooter's hill, from their favourite palace at Greenwich, to take the air; and here the archers of the royal guard, aware of Henry's taste for whatever could give to his diversions an air of fanciful romance, had attired themselves in the disguise of foresters, and addressing the king, the chief, who personated Robin Hood, requested him to see his men shoot: the king consented,

* Henry, created Earl of Lincoln; Frances, married first to Henry Grey, marquis of Dorset, and afterwards meanly to Adrian Stokes; Eleanor, married to the Earl of Northumberland.

and a display of archery succeeded; but the novelty by which the spectators were most amused, was an ingenious contrivance by which the arrows whistled as they flew. The foresters then begged that the royal party would "enter the green wood, and see how outlaws lived:" on this, Henry, turning towards his queen, demanded whether she and her damsels would venture into the thicket with so many outlaws: the queen declaring that "if he would, she was content," the horns blew, and they proceeded until they were arrived at a rustic arbour formed of green boughs, with apartments adjoining, constructed of branches, and so skilfully made as to call forth the commendations of the guests. Here was served a repast of venison and wine; and the party, greatly amused by this adventure, returned towards Greenwich. But the frolic did not terminate here; for, as they approached home, a chariot advanced, drawn by five horses, and on every horse sat a lady, with her assumed name inscribed on the trappings. "On the first courser, called Candé, sat Humidité or Humide; on the second courser, called Memeon, sat the lady Virtue; on the third, called Phaeton, sat the lady Vegetive; on the fourth, called Kimphon, sat the lady Pleasaunce; on the fifth, called Lampace, sat Swete Odour; and in the chayre sat the lady

May, accompanyed with lady Flora, richly appareled, and they saluted the king with divers goodlye songs, and so brought hym to Grenewyche. At this Maeyng, was a great numbre of people, to beholde, to their great solace and comfort." The amusements of the day were closed by horse-racing, in which the king, the Duke of Suffolk, the Marquis of Dorset, and the Earl of Essex engaged, riding on great coursers. They afterwards adjourned to a sumptuous banquet.*

* *Hall.* Sixth year of Henry the Eighth.

CHAP. IV.

Religious affairs. — Case of Hunne. — The Lollards. — Copy of the Bible in English. — Persecutions of heretics. — Rapid elevation of Wolsey. — His insolence to Warham, who retires. — Wolsey, as chancellor, unpopular. — Obtains the legacy. — His mode of living. — State. — Household. — His manner of going to the Court of Chancery. — His administration of justice. — Manners. — Entertainments at York House. — Jealousy of the old courtiers. — Their retirement from Court. — Regretted by Henry. — 1515-1516.

So ardent and so entire was the devotion to the see of Rome which Henry manifested during the first nineteen years of his reign, that had
1515. he died at that period, he could scarcely, according to Burnet, "have escaped being canonized:"* yet, notwithstanding this profound veneration for the church, the early part of this reign, although unmarked by any of those innovations which afterwards gave it so much importance, was neither undisturbed by contentions between the laity and the clergy, nor free from the effects of intolerance.

* *Burnet, Hist. Reform.* vol. i. p. 19.

Religion, connected with practical morality, was the last subject which entered into the contemplation of the majority of the clergy in the sixteenth century. It is not, indeed, surprising, that laxity of principle should have prevailed among divines, when the sum of religious duties was made to consist, "principally in the three essencial vowes, obedience, wilfull povertie, and chastitie; for these three," according to an orthodox writer of the day, "were to be considered the substanciall parts of religion." The laity were not, it appears, entitled, either by faith or conduct, to claim the merit of devotion, which was denominated "a state appertaynynge unto monkes and solitarie persons, which state is now only called religion." * These errors resulted from the ill-directed studies of those who were intended to enlighten and to correct mankind. While the study of scholastic philosophy continued to engross the attention of the learned, metaphysical discussions were considered far more important than the simple, yet essential, doctrines of Christianity, which were neglected for interminable controversies on mystical and abstruse points. Nor did the mischief end here; the Aristotelian philosophy, long rejected by the church as tending to

* *Whyteford's Pype of Perfection*, printed in 1532. See note in *Wordsworth's Eccl. Biog.* vol. i. p. 9.

atheism, had been at length received as a part of the orthodox system, chiefly from the arguments of Thomas Aquinas, a celebrated metaphysician of the middle ages. Imperfectly understood, but yet implicitly believed by churchmen, its tendency was unfavourable to natural religion; while long scholastic disputations, on points which could never be resolved, increased the danger of scepticism.* While the taste for mystical disquisitions was at its height, scriptural knowledge was confined to a few members of the clergy; outward ceremonies became the objects of religious zeal, and abstruse mysteries the standard of religious faith. Hence immorality and licentiousness, cupidity, pride and ambition, were the characteristics of the clergy; and never, in the resorts of the gay or the dissipated, has vice flourished with such impunity as in the retirement of the professed devotee of the period in question. But although the light, which eventually revealed all the corruptions of the church, had already begun to dawn, the jealousy of the

* Hence the various sects of Nominalists, Sabellians, Realists, &c. The word, and the definition of transubstantiation, originated from the scholastic writers. Equally puzzling and absurd were the disputes between Aquinas and Duns Scotus, respecting free-will, and which were afterwards taken up by the Dominicans and Franciscans; and the discussions upon angels, their modes of operation, means of conversing, and the difference between the morning and evening state of their understandings. See *Hallam's Middle Ages*, vol. iii. p. 537.

laity was, as yet, excited more by the immunities and privileges of the clergy, than by their irregularities in conduct, or defects of doctrine. Just cause of complaint was, indeed, afforded by the impunity with which a churchman might violate those laws which are essential for the peace of society. It was no uncommon occurrence for a man to receive orders after having committed the greatest crimes, nor could he be questioned about any offence after his admission, until he had been first degraded; in which case he became the prisoner of the bishop. Both Henry the Seventh and his son had perceived the evil consequences of these exemptions, and had endeavoured, by sundry acts of parliament, to diminish the latitude of conduct which they afforded to the priests. Henry the Seventh had wisely endeavoured to subject them to some degree of temporal restraint, by enacting that all convicted clerks should be burnt in the hand. His successor had improved upon this regulation, by an act denying the benefit of clergy to all murderers and robbers,
1512. and thereby rendering secular persons liable to be hanged for such offences.* But this act, although modified in the house of lords, so as to exempt all bishops, priests, and deacons from this salutary law, yet gave great

* See Acts, 4th year of Henry the Eighth, cap. ii.

offence to the clergy, who apprehended that the encroachment upon their immunities would not be confined to the lower orders of churchmen, and opposed, therefore, a most determined resistance to this innovation. They made the pulpit a vehicle of complaint.

The abbot of Winchelcomb argued the matter vehemently at Paul's Cross, and maintained that the act was contrary to the law of God and to the holy liberties of the church.* The temporal lords, roused by this fierce attack, entreated a hearing of the argument before the king, whom they petitioned to repress the growing insolence of the clergy: Henry was somewhat embarrassed in which way to proceed. His zeal for the church was excessive; a regard for its interests had been carefully inculcated on his mind by education, and the evident favour of the Romish see towards him had deepened that impression. He allowed, however, a discussion of this subject in his presence between the abbot of Winchelcomb
1513. and Doctor Standish, one of his chief spiritual advisers, guardian of the mendicant friars in London, and afterwards bishop of Saint Asaph: the controversy was not concluded, when an event occurred which gave

* See *Burnet*, vol. i. p. 23.

occasion to another point of discussion, bearing upon a similar subject.

A citizen named Richard Hunne, having lost an infant by death in his house, was sued by the curate of the parish for the burying sheet of the child, which he claimed as a mortuary or compensation for tithes left unpaid at the decease of any person. Hunne refused to give up the shroud, and was cited to appear in the spiritual court; but having secured good counsel, he sued the curate in a præmunire, for bringing him into a foreign court instead of the common law courts. Fitzjames, then bishop of London, and Doctor Horsey his chancellor, indignant at this reprisal, accused Hunne of heresy, and caused him to be imprisoned in the Lollard's tower. In this dungeon he was one morning found dead hanging by a silken girdle, which being loose round his neck, induced a suspicion as to the cause of his death. On examination it was apparent, that his neck had been broken with an iron chain, the skin being marked by an instrument of that nature; and from various other marks upon the body, it was too evident that his decease had not been the effect of his own hands.

Such, however, was the exercise of justice in the usage of the clergy, that the body was tried for heresy; and several articles from the preface

to Wickliffe's Bible, which was found in his possession, were charged against him; and, to conclude the farce, the mangled remains of the poor man were adjudged to be burned at Smithfield. To the disgrace of the church, the Bishops of Lincoln and Durham and many doctors of divinity and of the common law, sat with the Bishop of London on this case, so that the sentence was considered as the unanimous act of the clergy. The indignation of the people was excessive, and the city was never afterwards well affected to the priests.* The inquest, which had sat on the body of Hunne, pronounced him to be murdered; and the crime had been clearly traced to the bishop's sumner, the bell-ringer, and to Doctor Horsey, the chancellor. Great efforts were made to stop the trial of these men, which was immediately commenced; but even the authority of Wolsey, which was exerted to that effect, availed nothing. A bill was first passed in the House of Commons, for restoring Hunne's family to their goods and estate, which had the royal assent: and another was then introduced touching the murder, which occasioned violent contentions. The convocation of the clergy, perceiving the blow which was thus aimed at their privileges, summoned Doctor Standish before them. The tem-

* *Burnet's Hist. Ref.*

poral lords and judges thereupon appealed to the king to maintain his jurisdiction, and to defend Standish from his enemies. * The king, in great perplexity, had recourse to Doctor Veysey, dean of his chapel, and afterwards Bishop of Exeter, whose opinion favoured the argument of Doctor Standish in agreeing to the propriety of clerks being convened before secular judges. After a long discussion on this topic, and a decision by the judges in favour of the two doctors, the Cardinal publicly, and on his knees entreated the king, at an assembly of the lords spiritual and temporal at Baynard's Castle, to refer the matter to the pope: in this supplication he was seconded by the Archbishop of Canterbury, by the Bishop of Winchester, and by the majority of the clergy: But Henry, supported by the opinion of the judges, replied in these terms: "That the kings of England in time past had no superior save God alone; that he was resolved to maintain the rights of his crown, as his predecessors had done: that the decrees of the spirituality were not conformed to by many of its members; and that he was determined to preserve
1514. the same independence with regard to them as his progenitors had done." Nor did he condescend to reply to the reiterated

* See *Hall*, who gives a detailed account of this trial.

instances of Warham, in favour of an appeal to the see of Rome. That prelate for some time concealed Horsey in his house, against the warrants which were issued on the decision of the judges; and, afterwards, the culprit was screened from punishment by the intercession of Wolsey, who represented to the king the certainty of a verdict being found against Horsey, and the danger of irritating the clergy, by the execution of temporal justice upon one of their order. In consequence of this request, the attorney general was commanded to allow Horsey's plea of not guilty, so that the criminal was dismissed; but quitting London, he could never return thither either "for fear or shame."* Doctor Standish was also unjustly dismissed from the court of convocation.

This occurrence contributed, not a little, to withdraw from the real motives of the clergy that veil which implicit reverence for the church of Rome had thrown around their proceedings; but, although to preach against the indifference of the clergy to their duties, and to expose their love of luxury and display, had for some time been agreeable to the ears of many of the people, this country, at the accession of Henry the Eighth, was more entirely devoted to the papal authority than at any former or subsequent

* See *Burnet*, vol. i. p. 32.

period. It may seem that the anxiety of the king to secure his own prerogative was inconsistent with his professed attachment to the court of Rome; and, in fact, it was a proof of his ardent desire to maintain supremacy in all things; for no prince ever manifested, in other respects, a more superstitious reverence for the church. He was violent against heretics, and sanctioned the persecutions of the wretched Lollards, which were conducted with unrelenting fury during the primacy of Warham, and until a more enlightened mode of thinking arrested the arm of vengeance.* This sect, which may be regarded as the parent of the reformers, originated in the fourteenth century, from the doctrines of the celebrated John Wickliffe, who preached against the errors of the church, and rendered the Bible intelligible to the laity, by translating it into the vulgar tongue; nor had successive scenes of bloodshed quenched that enthusiastic zeal for the tenets of

* Lollard, derived by some from *lolium*, signifying *cockle* (or rather *darnel*), *Lolium temulentum*, the only poisonous plant of the grass tribe; because as that weed is a great damage to the wheat among which it grows, "so the Lollards," their enemies said, "corrupted and spoiled the well-meaning faithful among whom they were conversant." Others derive the name from one Walter Lollard, a German, a teacher of similar tenets. Most probably we may trace it to Lullard, or Lollard, the praises of God, a sect in Brabant so named. See note in *Wordsworth, Eccl. Biog.* vol. i. p. 71.

the founder which still appeared in his disciples. The opinions of Wickliffe were soon propagated in every part of the kingdom, and his proselytes became so numerous as to be compared to "suckers growing out of the root of a tree:" it was even said, "that you could not meet two people in the way, but one of them was a disciple of Wickliffe." Burning, the orthodox punishment of heretics, was not, however, inflicted upon the Lollards, until the reign of Henry the Fourth, who granted a law, empowering the clergy to sentence, and sheriffs and other civil officers to commit heretics to the flames, without a writ from the king. Accordingly these victims of an intolerant church were tied to the stake, and burned with such scraps of Wickliffe's translation of the Bible tied around their necks as were found about their persons. * After the conspiracy of Sir John Oldcastle, which had been attributed to the Lollards, in the reign of Henry the Fourth, all officers of state, judges, justices, and peace officers of every degree, were sworn to exert their endeavours to suppress these schismatics; the most active

* It has been contended that Wickliffe was not the first translator of the Bible, and that he did not understand Hebrew; but having collected such Latin Bibles as he could, made one entire copy, and then translated. He was, at least, the first who translated the whole together. See *Gilpin's Life of Wickliffe*, from note in *Wordsworth's Biograph.* vol. i. p. 103.

measures were, therefore, pursued against them, and the slightest expression of opinion of religious matters, was construed into an offence against the church. These proceedings were not likely to succeed, nor did they avail, in extirpating heresy.

If the vengeance of bigotry had been mitigated by charity, the clergy would have acted with more policy as well as with more humanity; their severity published that evidence of their vices, and of the corruptions of their doctrine, which otherwise might for a time have been silenced, and disseminated the opinions of the innovators. Many of the unhappy accused persisted in their opinions to the last breath, and their constancy in the midst of acute anguish, though it did not soften the rigour of their merciless judges, convinced spectators that their professions had resulted from sound conviction. It is true that some abjured their faith, and accepted the ignominious alternative of life with shame, but the allowance due to human weakness in this last trial of fortitude, induced men to pity, rather than to condemn.

It was in vain that the clergy endeavoured to suppress that copy of the Scriptures which had thus in part disclosed the means of obtaining knowledge dangerous to their authority, of the true acceptation of religious truths, and which

they deemed as too precious a "jewel" to be bestowed on the "laity, and even on women."* The reformers diligently sought this treasure, and when it could not be obtained entire, were thankful for transcripts from the sacred volume. Hence the doctrines of the Lollards, being derived from the same source as those of the Lutherans, and nursed by persecution which, while it stifled for a time any public professions of the new opinions, increased a secret belief of their truth, had paved the way for the reception of that more steady and permanent light which afterwards broke through the gloom of superstition.

In the years 1509, 1511, and, with little intermission, until 1529, repeated instances of cruelty and bloodshed, too numerous and horrid to be detailed, begot and nourished a general hatred of those who were the promoters of so much wretchedness. In the prelacy of Archbishop Warham, various instances of persecution occur. One poor woman having maintained that "it was better to give alms at home to poor people, than to go on pilgrimages; that images were but stocks and stones; that the sacrament was but bread; and that Christ could not be both in heaven and on earth," was threatened with death, but escaped by abjuring these well-founded opinions. Sometimes the heretics were forced to

* See *Gilpin's Life of Wickliffe.*

do penance by bearing the badge of a faggot in flames on their clothes, as a public confession that they deserved burning. Another female, Agnes Grevill, was indicted for heretical opinions, and her husband and two sons brought as witnesses against her. One man, Stephen Castiline, having had influence enough to draw several persons over to his opinions, was considered as too dangerous a person to be left at large, and was, therefore, sentenced to a kind of perpetual imprisonment in the precincts of the monastery of Leeds, in Kent. In case he ventured more than a mile from the place of his confinement, he was to be treated as a relapsed heretic: another part of his penance was to carry a faggot to the parish church every Sunday; and to these punishments, sufficiently mortifying in themselves, he was to add the mortification of spare diet.*

Not a single pardon, without abjuration, is recorded in those accounts of the persecutions of this period which are extant. The clergy, to excite the hatred of the people against their victims, failed not to accuse them of denying some essential points of faith allowed by all Christians, as well as of schism from the established church. The instruction of children in the creed, the Lord's prayer, or the ten

* *Collier's Eccl. Hist.* vol. ii. p. 2. *Burnet*, vol. iii. p. 53.

commandments, was thought sufficient proof of presumptuous inquiry into the merits of received opinions to deserve punishment; and when the alarm of the church was heightened by the intelligence of Luther's bold defiance of its power, several persons were brought to the stake at Coventry, merely for the offence above stated.

Such were the proceedings in religious affairs from the accession of Henry until the propagation of the Lutheran doctrines. Meanwhile Henry evinced his partiality towards churchmen by a succession of honours heaped upon the proud yet sapient Wolsey, which raised him to a height of favour whence he looked contemptuously upon the instruments of his elevation. He had been, as is already stated, preferred to the bishopric of Tournay on the surrender of that city to the English; and having banished thence the French bishop, in order that his pretensions to the see might not interfere with his own, he took possession of the revenues, and exercised there almost a princely government. His diligent attention to business rendered him, however, a popular ruler. The respectful manner in which every complaint from the king's foreign possessions was referred to him, prove his ability and willingness to serve the interests

1515.

of his diocese. So abject, indeed, was the style of these foreign dispatches to him, that they were usually addressed "To my lord cardinal's grace, and the privy council:" thus designating him as possessing a superior rank to that body.* In the same year that he was elected to the bishopric of Tournay, the bishopric of Lincoln, having become vacant, was conferred upon him. On receiving this preferment, he is said to have enriched it by sequestering some portion of his predecessor's goods, with which William Cavendish, who lived in his service, declares that he had seen part of his house furnished. Strange that such bounty of fortune should not satisfy the mind of this aspiring man, and that he should have demeaned himself so far as to violate the principles of justice and of honesty! The archbishopric of York was also, in the course of the same month, conferred upon Wolsey, in consequence of the death of Archbishop Bembridge, the English ambassador at Rome, who died there, as it was supposed, from the effects of poison.† This new dignity, which made the third bishopric bestowed on Wolsey in one year, com-

* See *Strype's Memorials*, vol. i. p. 172.

† This prelate was thought to have been poisoned by his steward, whom he struck in a fit of passion. He died July 1514.

pletely banished all the little portion of humility that he had ever possessed. Determined to gain the complete ascendancy in ecclesiastical affairs, he insolently took every opportunity of advancing the cross of York before that of Canterbury, even in the precincts of that diocese.* Warham, indignant at this assumption of superiority, failed not to reprove him for it; but Wolsey was not to be awed into humility: conscious, however, of the weakness of his claim to precedence, he sedulously endeavoured to obtain from Rome a cardinal's hat, which was shortly afterwards willingly presented to him by Leo the Tenth, anxious to gratify the rising favourite of the English king. This insignia of his holy office he caused to be carried before him, as an idol to be worshipped; and when it entered the king's chapel, he would not suffer it to be placed any where but on the altar. This honour was quickly succeeded by one still more important. Warham, disgusted with the evident neglect which he experienced, and oppressed with the infirmities of age, declared himself incapable of supporting the fatigues of his office, and repeated a request which he had before made, to retire to his episcopal duties: his resignation was at

Nov. 1515.

* This point had been before contested in the reign of Edward the Third. See *Wordsworth, note*, vol. i. p. 342.

length accepted, and the seals were transferred to Wolsey, who at first, either from pretended humility or from real reluctance to undertake so arduous an office, declined the honour; but was afterwards induced to retract his refusal.* The first proceedings of the new chancellor were arbitrary. During the session of parliament the act of the preceding year, respecting apparel, had been amended; the dress of temporal men of every estate had been regulated, and forfeitures assigned for the violations of the act. This statute had been repealed and another substituted: these frequent alterations evince the degree of importance which was attached by the despotic Henry to this subject; and Wolsey proved an active coadjutor in executing these imperious decrees. He sent commissioners immediately into the different counties, in order to enforce the statute of apparel, and also the regulations enacted at the same parliament concerning the wages of labourers, the hours at which they were to begin their work, and the time of their meals and repose.† Sometimes, not satisfied with the rigorous fulfilment of the laws merely by means of deputies, he took the enaction of the statutes into his own

* *Lingard's Hist.* vol. vi. p. 57.

† See Acts 6th year of Henry the Eighth, cap. i. and iii. Also 7th year of Henry the Eighth, cap. v. and vi.

hands. Observing an aged gentleman, named Simon Feby Prichard, in an old crimson velvet jacket adorned with various broaches, a dress which, probably, the rank of the individual did not authorize him to wear, he took it from him with his own hands; an unnecessary and impolitic exertion of authority, which gained the chancellor much odium. The commissioners were allowed to exercise so great a degree of tyranny, that a poor man was actually set in the pillory by one Slymjug, the mayor of Rochester, for no greater offence than that of wearing a *ryven* shirt. These, and other instances of oppressive injustice and despotism in trifles, ought, undoubtedly, to have a beneficial effect on the minds of those who are dissatisfied with the legislature in our own comparatively happy days.

But though the active measures which Wolsey adopted to enforce the laws were generally unpopular, they were, in many instances, both necessary and beneficial. It was an unpleasant, but yet a faithful, discharge of his duty, to call all those to account who had the distribution of the public money in any official situation during the late war. In this investigation, many persons endeavoured to save themselves from rendering a correct statement by bribery; some were found greatly in arrears, and several, not

guilty of any fraud, suffered for the dishonesty of others. Perceiving that the abuses of the courts of law resulted in a great measure from the frequency of false oaths, Wolsey punished perjury by affixing badges, with so much rigour, that instances of that offence gradually diminished during his chancellorship: he likewise repressed tumults, which were not then uncommon even among the higher classes; and every individual, from the nobleman to the peasant, alike experienced the effects of his vigilance.

In order to expedite the administration of justice, Wolsey established several new courts, to examine into the complaints of the poor by bill. One of these courts was held by Dr. Stokesley, almoner to the king, a man of more learning than discretion; the others sat in Whitehall, in the Rolls' chamber, and in the treasurer's room behind the star chamber. These courts soon fell into disrepute, from the delays and other inconveniences attendant upon them.

The greatness of Wolsey now seemed to have attained its climax, and the pride and ostentation of his nature kept pace with the unprecedented rapidity of his rise to power. In order more completely to humble the Archbishop of Canterbury, he resolved to obtain from the Pope the ex-

ercise of the legatine authority in England, and this dignity was bestowed on him in the course of the year following that in which he had received the rank of Cardinal. Upon hearing that the messenger appointed to convey to him the hat and the papal bulls was of low condition, he dispatched a number of his own retinue in costly array, to meet the courier, and commanded a body of priests and gentlemen to await the arrival of the hat on Blackheath, and to conduct it to Westminster Abbey, where the honour of Cardinal was confirmed to Wolsey, in the presence of most of the metropolitan clergy. Wolsey now assumed an inordinate degree of haughtiness in his deportment, especially towards the mortified and dejected Warham, who, having ventured to subscribe himself, in a letter to the Cardinal, "your loving brother, Canterbury," was sharply rebuked by his brother of York for presuming to address as an equal, one who, as legate, had the power to summon him and the whole body of clergy to convocation. The pomp which Wolsey maintained from this time, until his decline in the favour of Henry, affords so much cause of wonder at his indiscretion in braving the jealous hatred of the nobles, who looked upon his lowly origin with aristocratic contempt, and is so unparalleled a display of luxury, that some ac-

count of his mode of living will not be found uninteresting or unimportant.

In his office of legate, the Cardinal deemed it necessary, according to the account of his faithful servant Cavendish, "to the advancing of his legatine jurisdiction and honours, to have masters of his faculties, masters ceremoniarum, and such other like persons, to the glorifying of his dignity."* He had also two large crosses of silver, one of his legacy, the other of his archbishoprick, which were borne before him whenever he went abroad, by two of the tallest priests that he could procure. A number of young lords and gentlemen esteemed it a piece of good fortune to be continually in attendance upon the cardinal; and, as he preferred those yeomen who were tall and portly for his service, happy did that nobleman consider himself who could present him with a domestic possessed of these advantages. The household of this great man was conducted on a scale of expence and magnificence exceeding that of the king. In the hall of his mansion he had three different boards; the treasurer, steward, and comptroller's table: he had also a cofferer, who was a doctor, and attendant marshals and grooms for these departments. In the hall

* *Cavendish*, p. 347. According to *Fiddes*, Wolsey was made legate in 1516.

kitchen were also numerous officers; there were two clerks, a clerk comptroller, a surveyor of the dresser, and a clerk of the spicery, who maintained a continual repast in the hall. To these are to be added, master cooks, labourers, children of the kitchen, yeomen of the scullery, yeomen of the pastry, and pastellers under the yeomen. Then in his privy kitchen was a master cook, who went daily in velvet or satin, with a chain of gold round his neck, so honourable was the office of administering to his grace's palate; and in the several departments of the larder, the scalding house, the saulcery, the buttery, the cellar, the chaundery, the wafery, the wardrobe of beds, the laundery, the bake-house, the wood yard, the barn, and the garden, were yeomen and grooms sufficient, according to the notions of modern times, to carry on culinary and domestic operations for a barrack. The rest of the establishment corresponded to the kitchen. The Cardinal had a master of his horse, a clerk of the stable, a yeoman of the same, a saddler, a furrier, a yeoman of his chariot, a sumpter man, a yeoman of his stirrup, a muleteer, sixteen grooms of the stable, every one of them keeping four geldings; besides a yeoman of the barge, porters, and grooms of the gate, and a yeoman and groom of the almosnery.

The chapel was suitable in splendour to the

house, and in the superabundance of its servants. First, there was a dean, "a great divine and a man of excellent learning; a sub-dean; a repeater of the choir; a gospeller; a pistoller; of singing priests ten; a master of the children." The seculars of the chapel, singing men, were twelve in number; ten singing children, with a servant to attend upon them; and there were likewise grooms of the revestry, or vestry; cross and pillar bearers; besides different retainers, who came there at principal feasts. The furniture of the sacred edifice corresponded in grandeur to the whole; and the rich jewels, crosses, candlesticks, and ornaments were so numerous, that the minute biographer declares, that "it passes his capacity" to enumerate them: he specifies, however, forty-four very rich copes, which he had seen about the hall during processions; while Dukes and Earls were required by the proud prelate, when at mass, to present to him the bason at the lavatory. * Thus was the service of God a means of displaying the pride and luxury of man!

In his private apartments, if they could be so called, the haughty chancellor had a chamberlain, and a vice-chamberlain, besides lords and gentlemen ushers, most of whom were men of rank, and who were allowed two men to attend upon them. †

* *Lord Herbert.*

† Except the Earl of Derby, who was allowed five attendants. *Cavendish*, p. 348.

Then he had cup-bearers, carvers, sewers, and gentlemen daily waiters to the number of forty; he had six yeomen ushers, eight grooms of his chamber, forty-five yeomen of his chamber; and there were also pensioners on his bounty attending upon his board at dinner. Besides the divines of his chapel, there were sixteen daily in attendance upon the Cardinal. To complete the list, more curious than amusing, the Cardinal had his two secretaries, his two clerks of the signet, and four counsellors learned in the law; the number of domestics amounting, altogether, to eight hundred, among whom were nine or ten lords, fifteen knights, and forty esquires. *

Among the young nobles who waited upon the Cardinal, and who daily sat at his mess of lords, for they were not admitted to his own table, were the sons of several distinguished families, who, in compliance with an ancient custom, were frequently sent to the house of some eminent ecclesiastic, with the name of page, but probably more for the purpose of education, than for maintenance.†

* *Cavendish*, p. 349. Appendix in *Fiddes's Life of Wolsey*, p. 7. *Fiddes*, p. 107.

† In this way Sir Thomas More was educated under Archbishop Morton, of whom he has given a very interesting character in his Utopia. See *Wordsworth*, vol. ii. p. 249.

This custom was continued down to the reign of Charles the First. Ibid.

To support the enormous expences of such an establishment, the revenues of Wolsey, with the presents and pensions that he received from foreign powers, and his preferments, which were numerous and extremely lucrative, were computed to exceed those of the crown. Besides the dignities which have been already specified, he had the Bishopric of Durham, and in commendam the abbey of St. Alban's, although he did not enter upon the temporalties of that benefice until 1521; and he derived considerable revenues from the Bishoprics of Bath, Worcester, and Hereford; the incumbents of these were foreigners, who having been sent to England in legations, had been rewarded by Henry the Seventh with church preferment for various services which they had rendered to the state, that parsimonious prince avoiding, by this means, the necessity of conferring pecuniary gifts. Wolsey at sundry times obtained the revenues of these Bishoprics upon some easy remuneration to the diocesans, who considered it more secure to receive a small sum annually from their English sees, than to trust agents to transmit their revenues, of which they might be defrauded.* It is true that upon the restitution of Tournay to the French, Wolsey was obliged to

* See *Fiddes's Life of Wolsey*, p. 109.

relinquish his preferment in that city; but for this sacrifice he received an ample equivalent in money. *

It might be thought that the acquisition of honours so unbounded, and of wealth so ample, might reasonably satisfy the wishes of a man of low origin, who could not, in the early part of his life, have aspired to more than the respectable but obscure station of a parish priest. The same spirit, however, which impelled Wolsey to seek, and which had enabled him to attain the eminent station which he now held, still prompted him to direct his views and exertions to the most exalted rank that could be acquired, and to fix a steadfast gaze of hope upon the papal crown. His ambition was as boundless as his pride was insatiable. The pomp and state with which Wolsey deemed it expedient to perform his diurnal duties as the chancellor of England, have, however, been unjustly adduced as evidence of his arrogance and ostentation; for in this respect his conduct was not unprecedented. Previous to quitting his dwelling house, the Cardinal usually heard two masses, and his notions respecting the observance of all divine rites were so rigid, that, on the authority of one of his chaplains, he is said

* *Lord Herbert.*

never to have retired to bed, notwithstanding any exertion he might have undergone during the day, with any part of the service, even a collect, omitted in his prayers; a circumstance which probably exalted him much in general estimation at that age, when indefatigable supplication was considered as acceptable and necessary. After his religious duties were performed, Wolsey usually set forth about eight in the morning, and his appearance and procession are thus described by one who was a frequent eye-witness of his grandeur: "His upper garment was of either fine scarlet, or taffety, but most commonly of fine crimson satin engrained *; his pillion of fine scarlet, with a neck set in the inner side with blacke velvet, and a tippet of sables about his neck; holding in his hand an orange, whereof

* Wolsey was accused of introducing an extravagant mode of dress among the clergy, who never, it is said, before his time wore silk or velvet, yet it appears that they were as costly in their apparel as the laymen. Piers Plowman (who wrote in the time of Henry the Sixth) ridicules their modes, and enjoins them thus: —

"Make schorter your tayles, and brodyr your crownys;
"Leve your schort stuffide dowbelettes, and your pleytid
"gowneys,
"And kepe your own howsyng, and passe not your
"boundys.

Strutt's Manners and Customs, vol. iii. p. 79.

the meat or substance within was taken out, and filled up again with the part of a spunge, wherein was vinegar and other confections against the pestilent airs; the which he most commonly held to his nose when he came among any presse, or else that he was pestered with any suiters. And before him was borne first the broad seale of England, and his Cardinal's hat by a lord or some gentleman of worship, right solemnely. And as soon as he was entered into his chamber of presence, where there was dayly attending upon him, as well noble men of this realme, and other worthy gentlemen, as gentlemen of his own family, his two great crosses were there attending to be borne before him; then cried the gentlemen ushers, going before him, bare-headed, and said, 'On before my lordes and masters, on before, and make way for my lorde cardinall.' Thus went he down through the hall with a serjeaunt of armes before him, bearing a great mace of silver, and two gentlemen carrying of two great pillars of silver; and when he came to the hall door, there his mule stood, trapped all in crimson velvet, with a saddle of the same, and gilt stirrups. Then there was attending upon him, when he was mounted, his two crosse bearers, and his pillar bearers, in like case, upon two great horses trapped all

in fine scarlet. * Then marched he forward, with a traine of noble men and gentlemen, having each his footemen, fower in number about him, bearing each of them a gilt polleaxe in his hands; and thus passed he forthe until he came to Westminster Hall doore. And there he alighted, and went after this manner up into the chauncery, or into the star chamber; howbeit most commonly he would goe into the chauncery, and stay awhile at the barre, made for him, beneathe the chauncery, on the right hand, and there commune sometimes with the judges, and sometimes with other persons; and that done, he would repair into the chauncery, sitting there till eleven of the clock, hearing of suits and determining of other matters." †

* The cross was usually carried before the prelates on holidays and solemn occasions. *Strutt's Manners and Customs*, vol. iii. p. 21. It was not probably displayed so frequently as Wolsey caused it to be. This degree of pomp, like most of Wolsey's arrangements, was attributed to pride and insolence; but it was not unprecedented. *Anstis's Letter to Dr. Fiddes. Fiddes's Wolsey*, p. 89. Shelton, the poet laureate, satirized the Cardinal, and was obliged to take refuge in the sanctuary of Westminster, to screen him from the consequences of his temerity. He was also the subject of invective from the pulpit; Dr Barnes, who was afterwards burned at Smithfield in 1541, preached upon the Cardinal's luxury and parade at Cambridge, and was called to account by Wolsey. *Wordsworth, Eccl. Biog.* p. 353. 356. vol. 1.

† See *Cavendish's Life of Wolsey.*

In the administration of justice, Wolsey has been allowed the merit, from all accounts, of having exercised his functions with impartiality; and of having inclined a willing ear to the interests of the poor and lowly, in preference to those of the great and powerful. The possession of those admirable qualities, justice and sincerity, have been accounted for in Wolsey by the following reason: "that as he loved nobody, so his reason carried him;" but they may with greater probability be attributed to the liberal views which he entertained on every subject, and which evinced to him the narrowness and short-sightedness of that policy which consists in duplicity.

The beneficial effects of the wise and rigid conduct of Wolsey as a judge were speedily experienced by the people: robbers, highwaymen, and vagrants became so few in number, that the nation was not more free, to use an expression of Erasmus, "of poison and noxious wild beasts than of harmful men."* Lawsuits, which had long occupied the courts during the time of his predecessors, were speedily concluded, and equitably adjusted; his very ignorance of the law might, in some instances, render his decisions more agreeable to our common notions

* *Strype's Memorials*, vol i. p. 193.

of justice, while his natural penetration, aided by his knowledge of mankind, enabled this great, though unpopular, legislator, quickly to discern false from true evidence, and to select the most equitable and expedient mode of judging a case.* "It was strange to see the Cardinal," says Holinshed, "(a man not skilled in the laws), sit in the seat of judgement and pronounce the law, being aided at first by such as (according to the ancient custome) did sit as associate with him: but he would not stick to determine sundrie causes, neither rightlie decided, nor adjudged by order of law. And againe, such as were cleare cases, he would sometimes prohibit the same to passe, call them into judgement, frame an order in controversies, and punish such as came with untrue surmises afore the judges, and sharply reprove the negligence of the judges themselves which had received such surmises, and not well considered

* Yet, since it is impossible to satisfy every person, the dilatoriness of Wolsey was sometimes the subject of complaint; and Sir Thomas Alen, steward to the Earl of Shrewsbury, having some suit with the Cardinal, remarks with bitterness, "that he that shall be a sutor to hym, may have no oder besynes but giff attendance on his pleasure;" and adds, "he that shall do so, is nede to be a wiser man than I am." See *Lodges's Illustrations of Hist.* vol. i. p. 28. *Shrewsbury Papers.*

of the controversies of the parties."* It is admirable to observe, that while meditating those profound schemes for the improvement of that country over which he was daily attaining a more complete dominion, and of which he was becoming the master rather than the subject, Wolsey had leisure and versatility sufficient to render himself a perfect courtier, and to make his residence the seat of elegance, luxury, refinement, and learning. Although he manifested overbearing insolence in his actions, yet the manners of the Cardinal were courteous, and even kind; and he had a discriminating mode of commending those who were in the king's employ, which greatly conciliated their favour. He selected those young companions of the king who were disposed to be friendly towards him, and playfully extorted from them a vow of fidelity to himself and of mutual assistance. With the ladies of the court he was equally assiduous: "whosoever of them was great, with her he was familiar,

* *Holinshed*, p. 615.

Such, according to Polydore Vergil, was the administration of Wolsey at *first*, being a mere "colour of justice," which was soon laid aside when he perceived the entire ascendancy which he had gained over the king. It must be remembered that Polydore was an enemy whom Wolsey, for some misdemeanor, had imprisoned. *Holinshed*, though by no means partial to Wolsey, *Herbert*, *Fiddes*, *Strype*, *Cavendish*, concur in their testimony to the Cardinal's justice.

and gave her gifts.* So fascinating was his conversation, and so absolute was his power over the affections of Henry, that it was even reported he had bewitched the king with necromancy.† The intellectual advantages which Wolsey possessed were set forth to great advantage by a commanding person, and by natural dignity of aspect and manner, which, improved by intercourse with society of the first order, both in rank and in intellect, gave him an ascendancy even among monarchs. A graceful delivery completed this masterpiece of art and nature; who was inferred, from all these lofty attributes, to be "some prince's bastard, and not a butcher's son."‡ It may be readily supposed that a man so shrewd and penetrating as the Cardinal would not fail, by flattering the taste of his young master, to increase, or rather to secure, the influence that he possessed. Banquets, masques, and mummeries were prepared at the palace of Wolsey, with such ingenuity and splendour, that we are informed "it was a heaven to behold." §

* See *Strype's Memorials*, from the *Practice of Prelacy*, vol. i. p. 189.

† *Fiddes — Grove's Wolsey*, vol. i. p. 378. *Cavendish.*

‡ Hence the popular distich,

"Great priest, whatever was thy sire by kind,
Wolsey of Ipswich ne'er begot thy mind!"

§ *Cavendish*, p. 357.

Whitehall, then called York House, the general residence of the Cardinal, became the favourite scene of the court revels. "I have seen," says Cavendish, "the king come suddenly thither in a maske, with a dozen maskers, all in garments like shepardes; and before his entering into the hall, ye shall understande that he came by water to the watergate, without any noise, where were laide divers chambers and gunnes charged with shot, and at his landing they were shot off, which made such a rumble in the ayre, that it was like thunder. It made all the noblemen, gentlemen, ladies and gentlewomen, muse what it should mean, coming so sodainly, they sitting quiet at solemn banquet. Then immediately after this great shot of guns, the Cardinal desired the lord chamberlain and the controller to look what it should mean, as though he knew nothing of the matter: they, looking out of the windows into the Thames, returned again, and shewed him that it seemed they were noblemen and strangers coming as ambassadors from some forraigne prince. 'With that,' quoth the Cardinal, 'I desire you, because you can speak Frenche, to take the pains to goe into the hall, there to receive them according to their estates, to conduct them to this chamber, where they shall see us, and all these noble personages, being merry at our banquett, desiring them to sit

down with us, and take a part of our fare." The party on entering were announced by the chamberlain, as foreigners who had come to view the fair dames assembled in the banquet, to join them in a game at mumchance*, and afterwards to dance with them, and "to have of their acquaintance." When these diversions were finished, Wolsey, who knew that the king was among the disguised strangers, desired the chamberlain to inform them, that he was aware that there was a nobleman among them, who was infinitely more entitled to the seat of honour than he was; and to whom he would gladly surrender that distinction, if he knew to which of the visitors it was due. The maskers returned a message by the chamberlain, confessing that the surmise of the Cardinal was true, and challenging him to guess who was the noble personage to whom the place of honour belonged: "with that the cardinal taking a good advisement of among them, at the last quoth he, "Me seemeth the gentleman with the black beârde should be even he." And rising from his chaire, he offered it to the same gentleman in the blacke bearde, with his cap in his hand. The person to whom he gave his chair, was Sir Edward Neville, a comely knight of a goodly per-

* Mumchance, a game of hazard with dice. *Warton, Hist. Eng. Poet.* vol. i. p. 155.

sonage, that much more resembled the king's person in that maske, than any other. The king, hearing and perceiving the Cardinal so deceived in his estimacion and choice, could not forbear laughing, but pulled down his vizor and Mr. Neville's also, and dashed out such a pleasant countenance and cheare, that all the noble estates there assembled, perceiving the kinge to be there among them, rejoiced very much." A new banquet consisting "of two hundred dishes of wonderous costly devises and subtleties was served up, and the night was passed in banquetting and dancing, and other triumphant devices, to the great comforte of the kinge and pleasant regarde of the nobility there assembled."

The enemies of Wolsey have calumniated him in asserting that there was more grossness or immorality in the entertainments of his house than in those which were, at that period, customary in all courts; amusements which can be considered as detrimental to the reputation of a monarch, only when they divert his attention from pursuits of greater importance. There appears to have been so little irregularity, at this period, in the conduct of Henry, that the society and example of Wolsey, although the Cardinal was avowedly a man addicted to profligate pleasures, could not, in a great degree, have

contaminated the morals of his sovereign. It may be observed, that the decline of Wolsey in the favour of the king occurred at the time when Henry's passions induced him to repudiate an amiable woman, and a faithful consort; and it will be seen, that most of what is commendable in the character of Henry was displayed while he was under the influence of Wolsey. If we except the birth of one natural child, Henry left no stain on his conjugal fidelity; and although his subsequent life does not tend to inspire us with admiration for the generosity or delicacy of his behaviour to the fair sex, yet, in the height of youth, he was even rigid in imposing the marriage tie upon his domestics*, and strict in his own observance of his duties†, if we measure his conduct by that standard of morality by which princes, in common candour, must be judged. It might easily be foreseen that the former counsellors and favourites of the king would perceive and resent the influence of that individual whose unparalleled address was rapidly undermining the foundation of their favour.

* An instance of the king's interference in this respect is given in Lodge's Illustrations of History, vol. i. p. 29. in which there is a singular letter from Henry VIII. to a Mrs. Coward, enjoining her to marry one William Symonds, a servant of his. This curiosity is taken from the college of Arms.

† See *Fiddes*.

Their envy, however, by causing them to withdraw from court, left Wolsey without a rival. Bishop Fox, on retiring, advised the king not to "allow the servant to be greater than the master;" and was answered by Henry in these terms:—"that his servants should obey, and not command." * The Duke of Norfolk solicited permission to retire to his country house, for he found it impossible to supply money for the exigencies of the state; pageants, wars, and tournaments having nearly exhausted the treasury.† The Duke of Suffolk, who had hitherto maintained a close intimacy with Wolsey, was now indignant because the Cardinal, on summoning those to account who had borrowed money from the king to furnish retinues for the late war; had refused to cancel that part of the debt due from Suffolk, who, having incurred heavy expenses in his embassy to France, from his marriage, and from the maintenance of a household suitable to the brother-in-law of a king, was indebted to the treasury for a very considerable sum. He

1516.

* It does not, however, appear that the friendship between Wolsey and Fox was destroyed by these court cabals, for a friendly intercourse afterwards subsisted between them. *Chalmers' History of Oxford.*

† The Duke of Norfolk did not, however, resign his office until 1522, when his son, the Earl of Surrey, succeeded him. *Lingard's History of England,* vol. vi. p. 48.

therefore quitted the court, and lived for some time in retirement with his beautiful and royal consort. Henry soon began to regret the loss of those counsellors towards whom he had an hereditary obligation; and, when an occasion occurred which allowed him an opportunity of recalling them without derogating from his dignity, he gladly summoned them back to his presence.*

* *Holinshed*, p. 616. *Lord Herbert*, p. 58.

CHAP. V.

Death of Ferdinand King of Spain. — Character of that Monarch. — Birth of the Princess Mary. — State of Scotland. — Generous conduct of Henry to Margaret. — Her residence in London. — She partakes the Christmas Festivities. — Description of these; and of hawking. — Disturbances among the London artificers; their circumstances at this period. — Severity towards the Rioters. — State of commerce. — Return of Margaret to Scotland. — The sweating Sickness. — Restitution of Tournay to the French. — Treaty between France and England; an interview proposed. — Death of Maximilian. — 1516. — 1518. — 1519.

THIS year was not distinguished by any occurrences of much importance to Henry, except the death of Ferdinand, his father-in-law,
1516. and the birth of the Princess Mary. The first of these events took place in the month of January; and was the cause of impediment to certain negociations in which Henry had entered with Maximilian, late in the autumn. Maximilian, whose pecuniary necessities had obtained him the appellation of *pochidenari*, had long flattered Henry with the prospect of his one day resigning the Imperial Crown

in favour of the English monarch; a scheme which he held out chiefly with the view of obtaining from Henry such loans as the exigencies of the empire required. With this view, an ambassador had arrived in England during the month of October; and Henry, instigated partly by Wolsey, who was now violently opposed to the French interests, was liberal in his donations to the Emperor, and a secret treaty was concluded between Germany and England. Upon the death of Ferdinand, Maximilian, weary of war, changed his plan of action, and determined upon forming a truce with all his enemies: so that the alliance with Henry proved of no effect.

1515.

The death of Ferdinand was solemnly lamented in a funeral obsequy at St. Paul's, agreeably to custom, though it is probable, that Henry had now discovered how little reason he had to mourn the loss of so perfidious an ally, and of a relative who had so little his real interest at heart. The character of Ferdinand was consistently mean, selfish, and false; he gloried in dissimulation: "the King of France," said he frequently to his intimate associates, speaking of Louis the Twelfth, "is fool enough to affirm that I have deceived him *once*; the drunken dog lies, I have deceived him *twenty* times." So active was his intriguing spirit, that he not only scarcely took

rest himself, but debarred those around him from enjoying tranquillity: no man knew better how to render the weaknesses and passions of others subservient to his own views; and so great was the ambition of Ferdinand, that the project of acquiring universal monarchy was attributed to him. Yet, notwithstanding his conquests on the African shore, and the discovery of the New World in his reign, Ferdinand died poor; an atheist in religion, he averred that "he would keep his oath when any deity could be found whom he could believe in, to swear by:" yet his superstitious fears caused him to avoid Madrigale, a town at which it had been predicted that he should end his days; and, despising during his life all moral and religious obligations, his death-bed was a scene of fanatic and bigoted devotion to the church of Rome. He died at a village called Madrigaleio, whither his disease had obliged him to stop, and clothed in the habit of Saint Dominic, which he insisted on wearing before his decease.*

This event was soon succeeded by the birth of the Princess Mary, at Greenwich; an occurrence which was received with the
Feb. 18. greater joy, as the death of the two young princes who had been born

* *Lord Herbert*, p. 63.

previously, had greatly tended to revive in the mind of Henry those fears of the disapprobation of heaven towards his union, which had, at an earlier period, been suggested to his father.*

While the rest of Europe enjoyed, for a short period, comparative tranquillity, Scotland was harassed by contending factions. Margaret, the Queen of that country, sister of Henry the Eighth, who had been married at fourteen years of age to James the Fourth, a woman of high spirit, and of a bold and ambitious character, had been left Regent by her husband during the minority of her son James the Fifth, and of his brother, the Duke of Rothesay: but her power was only to endure during her state of widowhood. Braving, however, this limitation, which had been decreed by a convention of the states, Margaret, a few months after the death of James, had brought the country into a state of faction by marrying Archibald Douglass, Earl of Angus, a man of great influence from his birth and character, and of too aspiring a disposition to resign calmly that power to which the queen had now no just claim. He was supported, in his attempts to retain the Regency, by a party whom Henry secretly favoured,

* In November, 1514, the queen was delivered of a son, who died soon after his birth. *Stowe's Annals*, p. 498.

although Margaret's second marriage had been contracted without his consent. The Duke of Albany, cousin-german to the late King, was at the head of the other faction, which, during the reign of Louis the Twelfth, had been countenanced by the French court. After violent contentions between the nobles of Scotland who hated the power of the Douglasses, and yet dreaded the vengeance of Henry, should they again break out into open hostilities against him, Margaret and the Earl of Angus were at length forced to fly from Scotland. They proceeded from Tantallon to Berwick, and thence to the nunnery at Coldstream. Henry, being apprized of their flight, ordered them to be conducted to Harbottle Castle, in Northumberland, where they were received by Lord Dacres, warden of the marches. From this castle, Margaret wrote a supplicatory letter to Henry, who sent to the fugitives, not only his permission to remain in the retreat which they had chosen, but clothes, plate, and money. Margaret was soon afterwards delivered of a daughter, to whom she gave her name, Margaret Douglas, and who was subsequently married to the Earl of Lennox.*

It is evident that Henry, with very little risk or bloodshed, might have acquired an absolute

* *Holinshed, Hist. of Scotland,* p. 487.

dominion over Scotland during these domestic troubles: his vicinity, the terror of the English forces with which the battle of Flodden had inspired the Scots, his own tranquil condition with respect to other powers, and the near connection between him and the Scottish queen, affording him an obvious pretext for interfering in the affairs of her subjects, are all circumstances which excite surprize at that want of address and policy which prevented Henry from seizing such manifest advantages. But while this line of conduct may be deemed a deficiency of political skill, as a brother it was commendable and disinterested. He not only commanded that respect and attention should be paid to Margaret and her husband at Harbottle, but, in the course of the ensuing year, invited them both to his court. The Queen of Scots thankfully acceded to this proposal, but instead of being accompanied by Angus, she was suddenly deserted by him at the point of her departure for London.* Struck with consternation, she demanded advice from the English lords around her; and having received the intelligence that Angus had returned into Scotland, she was counsel-

* Douglas, says Lord Herbert, thought it a convenient opportunity to return home and settle his affairs, having made his peace with the Scottish government while at Harbottle. *Herbert*, p. 67.

led by her attendants not to delay her journey, but to accept the protection of a brother who had already manifested his regard for her welfare. Henry, on hearing that Angus had thus privately withdrawn from his wife, exclaimed, "that he had behaved like a Scot." He abated, however, nothing of his kindness to his sister; and Queen Katharine presented her with a white palfrey, on which, in compliance with a custom which would excite no small degree of astonishment in the present day, in a royal procession, Queen Margaret entered London, riding on a pillion behind Sir Thomas Par*; a great company of lords and ladies, richly attired, being in attendance. She alighted first at Baynard's Castle †, and thence proceeded to Greenwich, where she was cordially received by the king and queen, and where she had the happiness of beholding her sister Mary; thus "enjoying a felicity," in the words of Lord Herbert, "seldom known

* Probably Sir Thomas Par, or Parre, of Kendal in Westmorland, father of Katherine Par, afterwards queen. See *Fuller's Worthies*, vol. ii. p. 427.

† Baynard's castle, in Thames street, founded by a follower of William the Conqueror, from whom it derived its name. It was long in possession of the Fitzwalters, who claimed, in right of the castle, the office of castilian and banner bearer in the city of London. It was burned down 1428, was rebuilt by Humphrey Duke of Gloucester, and was afterwards frequently used as a temporary residence by several of our monarchs. *Pennant's London*, p. 477.

to princes, of meeting, after an union with foreign courts, once more at home." Tournaments were immediately proclaimed in honour of Margaret, and conducted with great magnificence. The king, who, with the Duke of Suffolk, the Earl of Essex, and Nicholas Carew, abided all comers, received as usual the chief meed of praise; even Sir William Kingston *, a tall and athletic man, was overcome by the agile monarch; and though "many did well," says the flattering chronicler, the "king did best."

Margaret remained during a year in England, and resided principally at Baynard's Castle; but subsequently fixed her abode in the palace of Scotland †, which was built for the reception of the Scottish monarchs. The kindness and deference which she received could not banish from her mind the desertion of Angus, with whom she never afterwards lived on terms of confidence and affection.

The Queen of Scotland passed the season of Christmas in the society of her English relations. This festival was celebrated during the sixteenth century by customs and diversions peculiar to

* Sir William Kingston, captain of the guard to Henry the Eighth, and lieutenant of the tower, was a man much employed and trusted by the king. *Fuller's Worthies*, vol. ii. p. 397.

† Now Scotland Yard, in Westminster. See *Stowe's Survey of London.*

Great Britain, our ancestors regarding it in the double light of a hallowed commemoration, and of a season of conviviality. Games, mummeries, pageants, and dancings enlivened their dwellings; cards, dice, tables, nayles, points, and other games, prohibited by the law at other times, were allowed during the holidays, while unbounded hospitality was maintained in their country mansions, dispelling the gloom naturally occasioned by inclement weather and the short continuance of day-light. The tables were spread from morning to night, and all visitors, whether invited or not, were made welcome to partake of the profuse and tempting provision by heralds, wearing the coates of arms belonging to their masters, and crying "largesse" in the spacious halls in which the festive board was usually spread.*

In order to give some degree of system and arrangement to the Christmas diversions, and to prevent their degenerating into riot or indecency, it was an ancient custom both in England and in Scotland to elect a lord of misrule, or, as he was called in the North, an abbot of unreason,

* The *Stately pie*, namely a peacock or pheasant pie, sirloins of beef, brawn, minced pies, turkeys, geese, capons, and plumb-pudding graced the board. The hachin, or great sausage, was to be boiled by day-break, or the cook seized by the arms and run round the market for her laziness. *Drake's Shakespeare and his Times*, vol. i. p. 206. *Strutt's Sports and Pastimes*, p. 306.

a mock prince whose reign extended through the greater part of the holidays, and whose office was to contrive, regulate, and controul the sports in which all were engaged, from the master to the menial, in this merry season. The lords of misrule, who were to be found exercising their authority in the palace of the king, as well as in the house of every person of distinction, from All Hallow eve to Candlemas day, contended with each other in friendly trial of skill, which should devise "the rarest pastimes to delight the beholder;" fine and subtle disguisings, masks and mummeries, attesting the success of this "pageant potentate." Besides an intimate knowledge of all the *business* of amusement, the "master of merry disports," as he was sometimes called, was required to be a good musician, to sing his caroll or song after supper, and to command other gentlemen to sing with him. This personage was established by royal authority, and continued in England long after other countries had discontinued the usage; but it was at length found that his authority was abused; immorality was sometimes permitted, and licentiousness made the companion of mirth. In short, as our ancestors became more intellectual, and less puerile in their diversions, the charms of the drama and of conversation engaged their attention, and

they found that they could be merry without hiring wit, or reducing pleasure to a system.*

Henry the Eighth kept up the festivities of Christmas with the same jovial spirit with which he promoted every other species of hilarity. It was his custom to keep his Christmas at his different country palaces in the vicinity of London; sometimes at Eltham, at Greenwich, or Richmond; and afterwards at Hampton Court, when that stately edifice came into his possession. This year Greenwich had the preference; and the revels were, as usual, prolonged until after Twelfth night, the usual ceremonies of New year's day intervening.

The beginning of the new year, in the time of Henry the Eighth, was celebrated with a much greater degree of form than the mere social

* In the time of Edward the Sixth, George Ferrers, a poet, an historian, and a lawyer, was employed as a master of the revels to the king, and received great commendation and reward from the king for the manner in which he had fulfilled this office. *Strutt*, p. 298.

Mr. Strutt is of opinion that the lord of misrule, generally considered as peculiar to Great Britain, was common on the Continent, although continued longer in England than elsewhere. p. 298. The inns of court retained this custom after it had been abandoned by the nobility. In France, the lord of misrule was called L'Abbé de Malgouverné and L'Abbé de Liesse. *Ellis's Letters on Engl. Hist.* vol. i. p. 273. This usage was discontinued in the reign of James the First, the Puritans considering it as the remains of a Pagan ritual. *Warton, Hist. Eng. Poet.* vol. ii. p. 380.

commemoration with which it is now observed. The custom of interchanging gifts was not, as in the present day, merely the display of good will among friends, but was a ceremonious attention due to royalty, from the most considerable of its subjects. In the household book of Henry the Eighth, the form of presenting these annual donations is prescribed, as a matter of considerable importance. Early in the morning the queen was to send her present to the king by a messenger, who, if a knight, was to be rewarded according to the pleasure of the monarch; but if an esquire, to receive eight marks, or at the least a hundred shillings. This ceremony being ended, the king, seated in state, was to receive the gifts of the archbishops, bishops, the great crown ministers of his household, and of the lords and ladies, who entered according to their several degrees.*

It is not surprizing, that so much form should have attended the reception of these donations, when it is remembered that they consisted generally of presents in money, by fifty, thirty, and ten pounds from each person, according to his rank, or of jewels, wearing apparel, and books, then articles of great value; and that from these contributions the royal wardrobe was replenished, and the king's private

* Harleian MS. 365.

purse considerably augmented. The clergy were usually more liberal in their offerings than the temporal lords; and during the subsequent part of this reign their generosity increased with their fears of the arbitrary temper which the monarch displayed.*

The New year's day was succeeded by the festivities of Twelfth night, which were reverently observed not only at court, but at the universities, the Temple, Lincoln's-Inn, and Gray's-Inn; and with this day the holiday diversions of Christmas terminated with the rich, while, among the lower ranks, they were usually prolonged until Candlemas.

The Twelfth cake and the wassail bowl, customs of great antiquity, were usually followed by a pageant, or a masque, from which is de-

* Some of the gifts sent to the Princess Mary are as follows: "a little tablet of gold from the Prince (Edward VI.); a little chain, a pair of hose wrought in gold and silk from the Princess Elizabeth; a gown of carnation satin of the Venice fashion from my Lady Margaret (the Lady Margaret Douglas); a wrought smock from my Lady Frances Dorset; a pepper-box of silver gilt from Lady Butler; a book from Lord Morley; a diamond ring from the Earl of Hertford; a fair steel glass from three Venetians; a hat from Dr. Augustines, and a pair of silver snuffers from Mr. Hobbs. The rewards, made in money to the servants who brought these presents, amounted to no inconsiderable sum." *Ellis's Original Letters*, vol. i. p. 272.

Strype's Mem. vol. i. p. 210.

rived the practice, still in use, of personating fictitious characters on the festivity of Twelfth night.* The entertainment, which was on this occasion presented before the dejected queen of Scotland, was a pageant, representing the garden of Esperance. This garden had a tower at each corner, and was surrounded with gilded railings; within were banks set with artificial flowers of silk and gold, the leaves cut in green satin, "so that they seemed verie flowers," and in the midst was a pillar of antique work, formed of gold and set with pearls and precious stones. On the top of the pillar was an embowered arch, with a golden crown on it; and within it a bush of red and white roses, all of silk of gold, with a tree of pomegranates, of the same materials. Six knights, and as many ladies richly attired, then appeared, descended into the hall, and danced many goodly dances. After these were per-

* We are indebted to King Alfred for the festivities of Twelfth Night; that king having made a law with respect to holidays, by virtue of which the twelve days after Christmas were to be holidays. *Collier, Eccl. Hist.* vol. i. p. 163.

Many of the masques of Ben Jonson were written for the amusement of the royal family on this night. *Drake*, p. 132. vol. i. The custom of choosing a king and queen was derived from the idea that the Eastern Magi were kings, and hence this day has been called the feast of the three kings. *Drake*, 127. vol. i.

formed, they retired into the enclosure, and the pageant was conveyed out of the hall. *

When the diversions of Christmas were ended, Henry had recourse to the exercise of hawking, in which he took great delight and displayed considerable proficiency in his juvenile days. As this sport was the frequent recreation, not only of the king, but of the English nobility in general, at this period, some account of it may not be deemed an unnecessary digression.

"Hawking or falconry, the art of training or flying hawks for the purpose of catching other birds," had this distinctive character from the other pastimes of this period, that it could only be practised by persons of rank. The possession of a hawk was considered as one of the ensigns of nobility; and those who were entitled to be the owners of this bird, frequently travelled with them, took them to the field of battle, and refused to part with them, even to procure liberty when taken prisoners. No action was deemed so disgraceful to a nobleman as to surrender his hawk or his dog. †

The laws of etiquette which prohibited the

* This spectacle was preceded by the cake and wassail bowl, of which the king and queen partook at a stated time. See *Harleian MSS.* 365, in which is described the order and place wherein the king and queen are to receive the "bowl and wassail."

† *Holinshed*, p. 616. also *Strutt's Sports*, p. 21.

use of the hawk to the vulgar, regulated, in the same aristocratic spirit, the species of bird, which, according to the degree of an individual, he was permitted to possess.* An emperor might have an eagle, a vulture, or a melown; the king must descend to a gerfalcon; a falcon gentle and a tercel gentle were permitted to a prince; a falcon of the rock, to a duke; a falcon peregrin to an earl; a merlyon to a lady; an hoby for a young man; a goshawk for a yeoman; a sparrow-hawk for a priest; besides other varieties of the bird, too numerous to recite.

The ladies and the clergy both joined in this amusement, in which the fair sex frequently equalled and sometimes excelled the sportsmen; and assuming, in some instances, the male attire, ladies of rank occasionally formed parties of their own, or joined those in which their lords took a share. To a lady, indeed, is to be ascribed an elaborate treatise on hawking†, which was

* During the reigns of Elizabeth and James the First, hawking descended to the gentry and yeomanry; and no man could have the slightest pretension to the character of a gentleman who did not keep a cast of hawks. *Drake's Shakespeare and his Times*, vol. i. p. 256.

† Dame Julian Barnes, or Berners, sister of Richard Lord Berners, and prioress of the nunnery of Sopewell, wrote a treatise on hawking, hunting and heraldry, which was printed in the neighbouring monastery of St. Albans, in 1481. The style in which this work is written, is an instance of the want of refinement in females of the sixteenth century.

regarded as the best authority respecting every particular of this sport.

This writer, who was prioress of the nunnery of Sopewell, and who exercised the same mannorial jurisdiction, as an abbot, was not, it seems, prevented by her sacred profession from entering into this diversion as a study. The clergy were, nevertheless, prohibited by canon law from participating in this amusement, but with little effect; and they drew down severe censures from the poets of the day, on account of their immoderate fondness for this recreation.*

The mode in which hawking was practised varied according to circumstances, for it was pursued either on foot or on horseback, or by the side of lakes or smooth water. Henry seems to have preferred the land amusement; and entered into it with so much ardour as sometimes to encounter inconvenient and dangerous accidents.† On foot the sportsmen were provided with a long pole, in order to assist them in leaping over hedges, ditches, or fences, which might obstruct their progress. The party who wished to pursue water hawking were obliged to wait by the side of a river or pool until the game arose; or if that did not take place soon, they were indebted

* *Strutt's Sports and Pastimes*, p. 27.

† *Hall*, 16th year of Henry the Eighth.

to the assistance of the falconer, who, by alarming the birds, induced them to fly aloft, and to encounter their destruction.

The hawk, which was brought to the scene of action hood-winked and seated on the hand, was now uncovered and allowed to fly at the prey; but was not left to her own discretion, being confined to the hand of the sportsman by straps of leather, called jesses, which were fastened round the legs of the bird; and to these jesses were attached lines, or thongs of leather, which the sportsman wound loosely round his little finger. The legs of the hawk were adorned with bells fastened with leathers, to which was attached a creance, or long thread, by which the bird, when in training, was drawn back, after she had begun to fly, or, to use technical language, reclaimed. It was necessary that the bells should not be too heavy, lest they should impede the flight of the bird; that they should be of equal weight, and musical, both of one sound, one a semitone below the other. The Milan bells were considered the best, the sounds being silver, but they were expensive; and there were also good bells brought from Dort in Holland. The person who carried the hawk was provided with gloves for the purpose, to prevent the talons from hurting the hand. Henry possessed, as it appears from his inventories, several articles of

this nature, and those in his possession were usually richly embroidered. *

It may easily be supposed how important a personage the falconer, who had the training of the birds, was deemed; and how valuable the well-tutored falcons must have been considered, when this sport was regarded so important to the happiness of the monarch and of his nobles, that it was thought necessary for the government to afford its protection to the young birds. Henry the Seventh, who was not too much inclined to promote any thing like pleasure, made a law in the eleventh year of his reign, enacting, "that if any person was convicted of destroying the eggs of a falcon, a goshawk, a swan, or a lance, he should suffer imprisonment for a year and a day, and be fined at the king's pleasure." Nor was this act mitigated until the reign of Elizabeth, when the amusement of hawking was on its decline. Immense sums were frequently given for a pair of falcons; and it was even considered as a favour to sell the object of such constant care, vigilance, and pains, as a well-educated hawk.

Such was one of the various pastimes in which Henry improved his bodily vigour, and dissi-

* *Strutt*, p. 29.

At Hampton court, in the jewel house, were seven gloves embroidered. *Harleian MS. lib. insig.* 1419.

pated the revenues. Katharine appears not to have joined in this exercise, which, though practised to a great extent in France, was not pursued with the same ardour in her own country. Devoted to her needle, in the words of Forest, a poet of the day:

> "With stole and with needle she was not to seeke
> "And other practiseings for ladies mete
> "To pastymes, and tables, tick tacke and glete,
> "Cardis and dyce." *

In process of time, the ladies, easily led by example and fashion, began to employ themselves more in "needle-work, cutworks, bone-lace-making, and other pretty devices;" but these feminine accomplishments were not generally preferred to the animated exercises of hawking and hunting, until the beginning of the next century. †

The exemption from foreign wars enjoyed at this time by the king enabled him to bestow a greater degree of attention upon the
1517. affairs of his subjects at home. The commercial interests of the country were the cause of serious disturbances, during this year, in the metropolis; and Henry, on his return from Greenwich, became engrossed with subjects of a more momentous kind than the

* *Warton, Hist. Eng. Poet.* vol. iii. p. 314.

† *Burton's Anatomy of Melancholy.*

following of a hawk, or the contrivance of a pageant. The artificers of London, who had long considered that they were injured by the practice of encouraging the introduction of foreign commodities, began to manifest a considerable degree of irritation and impatience, and a determination to take their cause into their own hands.

The late king, with a view to benefit trade, had carefully laid down stipulations in most of the treaties that he formed with foreign powers, for establishing a commercial intercourse between them and Great Britain. He encouraged Italian and German merchants to visit his dominions, to dispose of foreign goods, and to take in exchange woollen cloths, tin and lead; and gave them a safe conduct to protect them from molestation. At first, these foreign traders were constrained to pay double duties on the goods which they exported and imported, but this being found detrimental to commerce, the customs were abated, and the trade became rapidly considerable.* The greater portion of the foreign artificers consisted of Germans residing in London; and a company composed of these foreigners, entitled the merchants of the steelyard, established themselves in the city, and carried on a brisk traffic in wheat, rye, pitch, tar, cables, flax,

* See *Henry's Hist. England*, vol. xii. p. 546.

hemp and linen cloth. These traders resided in Cosin lane, Downe-gate ward, separate streets being then assigned to the various branches of trade; so that these busy scenes which are now replete with variety, must have possessed far less attraction in the sixteenth century, when no shops, but those allotted for some specified calling, were seen in the different streets.

Those who were in quest of gloves and ribbands were then obliged to adjourn to East Cheape, where the haberdashers hung out their tempting wares; as also, on London bridge, where, in the time of Stowe, some of these shops remained. The pepperers and grocers were in Bucklersbury; all the cooks' shops were to be at Cooke's row, in Thames street, "where travellers might find, at all times of the day, meat roast and boiled, and fish." The granaries of the city were kept at Leaden-hall; but the bread was baked at Stratford-le-bow, and brought thence in carts to the city.*

The German company was the most ancient, and the richest in England; and, having made many superb presents to the English monarchs, it was generally favoured by the court. The merchant adventurers of England shared the trade with this great body, and being composed entirely of Englishmen, enjoyed the goodwill of the people.

* See *Stowe's Survey of London.*

But while both Henry the Seventh and his son encouraged foreigners to settle in the kingdom, and endeavoured to establish a facility of intercourse with other nations, they carefully protected the interests of the English merchants, and even occasionally lent them sums of money; yet, notwithstanding this attention to trade, it certainly was so little understood at this period, that the English traders, finding that the money exported far exceeded that imported by the foreign merchants, endeavoured to obviate this evil by the following expedient: they persuaded Henry the Seventh to enact laws compelling all traders, whether foreign or native, to import in every ship a certain quantity of bullion in proportion to the value of the other goods, and to lay out that coin or bullion in the commodities of the country, forbidding any bullion to be exported. In this scheme, however, the merchants overlooked the important circumstance, that when the value of the imports exceeds that of the exports, the balance must be paid in precious metals; nor could any laws take effect, or prevent this inevitable result.

Henry the Eighth was not possessed of the sound judgment of his father, nor of his knowledge of commercial affairs; but he clearly saw how essential to his interests, and how conducive to his importance, was the extension and im-

provement of trade; with all his good intentions, his pleasures, perhaps, conduced more to a brisk circulation of trade than many of his laws and regulations. The display and amusements, the dress and extravagance of the court, the emulation to excel in every species of splendour, which prevailed among the nobility, and the intercourse with the French, who have always surpassed us in all that is gay and costly, naturally occasioned an enormous demand for silks, damasks, jewels, wines, spices, and luxuries of every description. These articles were supplied chiefly by Genoese, Florentine, and Venetian merchants, to whom safe conducts and assurances of protection were given. But jealousies, in some respects well founded, and justified by insults and injuries, appeared among the English merchants towards these unwelcome intruders upon their privileges. It appears to have been the intention of the British kings to divide trade between the two rival companies; but this scheme was frustrated by incessant contests, which, in the succeeding reign, ended in the abolition of the German traders as a corporation in England.

At this time the hatred and envy of the English towards the foreign merchants broke out into tumult, and some time elapsed before the commotion was quelled. The insulting conduct

of the unpopular party contributed greatly to increase the irritation of the citizens, and drove them almost to fury. The foreigners, boasting of the favour and protection of the king, inflicted all those insults on the English mechanics and tradesmen, that persons, accustomed themselves to subjection and to obsequious deportment, delight to offer when they have an opportunity of asserting an arrogant superiority. An instance of this oppressive insolence occurred in the case of one Williamson, a carpenter, who having purchased two stockdoves, was rudely deprived of them by a Frenchman, who declared that they "were not meat for a carpenter:" the poor man in vain declared, that having paid for them, he had a right to regale himself; but the Frenchman ran off with them, crying out that he would take them to the French ambassador. Some opprobrious language was the natural result of this insolent and shameful conduct; the carpenter having given vent to his indignation, was sent to prison through the interest of the ambassador, who, on being sued by the mayor of the city to permit his deliverance, answered, "that by the body of God the English knave should lose his life, for that no Englishman should deny what a Frenchman required:" nor would he give any other reply to the intercession of the carpenter's friends.

This occurrence, succeeded by others still more aggravating, induced a man named John Lincoln, a broker, to address a bill, posted in the streets, to Doctor Standish, a popular preacher, intreating him in his sermon, at Saint Mary Spittal on Easter Monday, to move the mayor and aldermen to take part with their fellow-citizens against the strangers; but Standish refused, alleging that the matter was not proper for a discourse of religious matters. Lincoln, not discouraged by this rebuff, had recourse to one Doctor Bele, a canon of the church of Saint Mary Spittal, and to him he represented the distressed state of the English artificers; that their complaints had been presented to the counsel, but had been denied a hearing; that the foreign tradesmen residing in the suburbs, in Southwark, Westminster, Holborn, Temple Bar, Saint Martin's, Algate, and Tower Hill, intercepted the best articles of traffic before they could be brought into the markets; that the Dutchmen imported nails, iron, wainscot ready prepared, baskets, tables, chairs, and other household implements, so that the English had no opportunity of trafficking in this branch. "Their number," added Lincoln, "was so great," that one Sunday in Lent "he saw six hundred foreigners shooting at the Popinjay

with cross-bows, and from the ascendancy which the size of their party gave them, winning from their opponents large sums of money to put into their common box."*

Prompted by these representations, Doctor Bele openly preached against the favour and opulence which foreigners enjoyed, and his sermon inspirited many persons who were before cautious, to speak boldly against these detested intruders. The young apprentices began now to evince openly the ill-will which rankled in the minds of all the citizens towards the foreigners, and insulted them on every occasion; on which account some of these youths were committed to prison by the mayor. Meanwhile, a rumour prevailing that on the first of May next, afterwards commonly called evil May-day, a general insurrection of the citizens was projected, Cardinal Wolsey sent for the mayor, and desired that on the night of the twenty-ninth of April, he would order every inhabitant to his separate ward, and that no doors should be allowed to

April 18, 1518.

* Shooting at the Popingay, (a stuffed bird, usually representing a cock, and placed on a post, or in a tree,)was generally practised at this period in the fields of Finsbury, or other uninclosed places round the suburbs of London. *Strutt's Sports and Pastimes*, p. 48—60.

open after nine in the evening, nor before seven in the morning. This order had been scarcely proclaimed, when Sir John Monday, an alderman, found two young men playing at a game called Bucklers, with a considerable party of youths looking on. On his remonstrating with the young gallants, they resisted, and, raising the cry of "clubs and 'prentices," the street was instantly filled with armed men; not only the the citizens and lower orders of people, but some individuals of higher rank being among the rioters. The city was quickly in a state of commotion, the people rising as if by common consent; nor could the presence of Sir Thomas More, who was greatly beloved by the citizens, and who was sent to persuade them into submission, pacify their indignation. They immediately rescued from Newgate several men who had been imprisoned for insulting the foreigners; and intelligence being conveyed to the Lord Chancellor Wolsey, he considered these disturbances of a nature so alarming, that he thought fit to provide an additional guard to his own dwelling. The king was likewise apprized of the riot, and the Earls of Surrey and of Shrewsbury were sent, with a body of troops, to subdue the tumult.

The rage of the multitude was chiefly directed against one Mewtas, a native of Picardy, who had afforded assistance to the French in carrying

on an illicit trade in the city. The disorder, however, was not of long duration, for about three in the morning the city was restored to tranquillity. The lieutenant of the Tower, Sir Roger Cholmondeley, incurred much ill-will by injudiciously firing off certain pieces of ordnance upon the rioters, an act which was both unnecessary and severe. The ringleaders of the rioters having been seized and committed to custody, and Dr. Bele and John Lincoln imprisoned in the Tower, commissioners were appointed to hear and decide on the punishment due to the offenders. This court, over which the mayor, the Duke of Norfolk, the Earl of Surrey, and several other noblemen presided, sat in Guildhall, whither the prisoners were brought, tied together with ropes, to the number of two hundred and forty-eight persons. These poor men were indicted of treason, on a statute of King Henry the Fifth, which made it a treasonable offence to commit an act of hostility towards any country with which the king was at peace.* The greatest rigour was expected from the Duke of Norfolk, whose hatred towards the citizens was so notorious, that the year preceding, a profligate priest belonging to his household having been killed in the streets, he

* See Pub. Act, H. 5. Ann. Secundo, Cap. 6.

was reported to have said: "I pray God I may once have the citizens in my power!" Whatever may have been the animosities of the duke, however, towards the citizens, his fear equalled his dislike, and he thought it necessary to issue a proclamation, that all men should keep their wives at home, and that women should not be allowed to loiter and talk in the streets. So much influence is the female sex supposed to possess, and to exert occasionally, to create and increase confusion. Every other precaution was taken to ensure tranquillity.

The Duke of Norfolk was attended in his progress to the city by a guard consisting of thirteen hundred men; and, in the streets, were placed guards who insulted the citizens, who were too much dejected to reply to their attacks. Although the rising of the malcontents appeared to have been by one consent, yet, as upon examination, no previous combination could be traced, the proceedings of the commission seem harsh and rigorous: thirteen of the mob being executed on gibbets erected in those parts of the city where the principal outrages had been committed. This sight distressed the people, who were, moreover *, treated with unnecessary cruelty by Sir Edmund Howard,

* According to Hall, whose evident partiality to the citizens causes us sometimes to distrust his representations.

Knight Marshall, and insulted with opprobrious language by the servants of the Duke of Norfolk. A few days after this melancholy scene, Lincoln and several others were condemned to death; Lincoln was executed, but his companions received a respite at the gallows; an act of mercy which was received by the people with acclamations of gratitude. The king probably began to perceive that his commissioners were pushing this affair with too much severity; and, after accepting the apologies of the recorder for his apparent remissness in permitting these disturbances to assume so serious an aspect, he suffered the prisoners to be brought into his presence, where Wolsey, kneeling before him, entreated mercy for the delinquents. His request was conceded, this mode of granting pardon having been previously concerted; and after reprimanding the mayor and recorder for their negligence, and declaring that the prisoners had justly merited death, Wolsey proclaimed the king's gracious pardon; on which the culprits, who (as Hall says) were "none of the discreetest sort," cast up their halters into the air; and many offenders, who had not been tried, rushed into the hall and received the royal mercy with the rest. It is a pleasing circumstance that this clemency towards the citizens was accorded at the entreaties

of three queens; Katharine of Arragon, Mary of France, and Margaret of Scotland, who, on their knees before Henry, had begged for mercy to the citizens. There is reason, however, to suppose, that had not this petition been seconded by the counsels of Wolsey, Henry would have been so ungallant as to have refused it.* The gallows were immediately taken down; and many a good prayer was said for the
May 22. king, whose popularity was greatly increased by this wise termination of the affray. †

During this month, Margaret, Queen of Scotland, returned to her own country. Her entire expences, during the year which she passed in England, were defrayed by Henry; and, at her departure, he supplied her so amply with jewels, tapestry, plate, money, horses, and other things necessary in her exalted condition, that, poor as she entered these dominions, she left them "with great riches;" and the king, with consistent liberality, paid the charges of her journey back to Berwick, as he had done those which Margaret had incurred in coming to his court. ‡

The month of June this year was enlivened by jousts which the king held expressly for the enter-

* *Stowe's Chronicle*, p. 508.
† *Hall's Chronicles*, p. 591. ‡ Ibid.

tainment of the foreign ambassadors. Henry, with a party of twelve combatants, on this occasion entered the lists against the Duke of Suffolk, with a troop of the same number. The dresses of the king and of his followers were very splendid; and Henry wore on his head a lady's sleeve full of diamonds. The duke, attended by the Marquis of Dorset, the Earls of Essex and Surry, and eight others, "had his bases of white velvet and crimson satin, lozenged, and set full of letters of C. M. of gold, for Charles and Mary." Then the trumpets having sounded, the king and duke ran fiercely against each other, and their followers also engaged. It was impossible in so great a display of valour to say who distinguished himself most; for according to the report of Sir Edward Guildford, master of the armoury, and of the judges and heralds, five hundred and six spears were broken at these jousts. In the evening a sumptuous banquet was served up to the king and the ambassadors, and many riddles and pastimes were introduced, which closed the amusements of the day.

The appearance of the sweating sickness, which again broke out, and swept off numbers of the people, cast a gloom upon the court, to which its ravages now extended. The king, distressed at the effects of this fever, kept no solemn Christmas, and, fearful of infection, remained in

a seclusion little congenial to his inclinations. Lord Grey de Wilton, Lord Clinton, and many knights and officers, fell victims to this pestilence; and in some towns there was a great mortality. It was thought necessary to remove Trinity term from Westminster to Oxford, where it continued, however, but for one day, and was again adjourned to Westminster.

A treaty was this year agitated between the kings of England and France, concerning the restitution of Tournay. The unprofitable conquest of that city had produced little but anxiety to Henry, who incessantly dreaded lest his garrison there should be surprised by the French; yet Wolsey, who with all his pretended zeal for his master's interests, never, when they interfered with his own, relinquished that selfish policy which in the end proved one source of his ruin, had persuaded Henry to retain the city, and to build a strong fortress there, at considerable cost, for its defence. The Cardinal found some difficulty in managing the affairs of his foreign diocese, of which he soon became weary. The French Bishop elect and the Abbot of Tournay were resolved not to submit tamely to see their preferments wrested from them; and the neighbouring cities naturally inclined to favour the clergy of their own country, refused to submit to the spiritual jurisdiction of Doctor Sampson,

Wolsey's almoner, whom he had left there as his vicegerent.* This man not only promoted the interests of Wolsey with zeal, but flattered his vanity with presents, and sent him, among other things, a curious piece of tapestry wrought in France, representing the figure of Saint George on horseback, which was highly prized by the Cardinal.†

The council of Tournay seemed also to know how expedient it was to be entirely devoted to the favourite of their monarch; and Wolsey, whose power was now absolute every where, was addressed by Doctor Sampson as the "father of his country."‡ Yet the tenure of the bishoprick of Tournay was not the more certain for the devoted servility of the garrison; and Wolsey, by means of spies, having discovered a plot to attack Tournay, as the principal object of assault, and likewise to invade England on the side of Scotland, a confederacy in which France, Scotland, Denmark, and some disaffected English were united, endeavoured to instigate Henry to a fresh war.§ The king would not consent to so rash a proceeding without the advice of his old

* Sampson, whom Wolsey afterwards by his influence elevated to the offices of king's chaplain, and dean of St. Stephens, on his return to England, sat in the Privy Council, and in the end became a bishop.

† *Strype's Mem.* vol. i. p. 29. ‡ Ibid. p. 13.

§ *Strype's Mem.* vol. i. p. 13—21. 31—35.

counsellors; and for the benefit of their opinion recalled them to court. The Duke of Norfolk, the Archbishop of Canterbury, and the Bishop of Winchester, strongly opposed a breach of the treaty with France, and represented it as equally unjust and imprudent. The counsellors who were under the influence of Wolsey, and the Cardinal in a vehement speech, argued in favour of hostilities. Henry, however, had hitherto held a middle course between the paths in which these two opposite factions wished him to walk, and had contented himself with secretly giving Maximilian drafts upon the Friscobaldi, Italian bankers, to enable him to continue his operations against the French in Italy; and Wolsey was won over to the Italian party by a pension of 10,000 ducats from Maximilian Sforza, Duke of Milan. Francis, however, contrived by flattery and presents to win back the favourite to his interests; a secret negociation was immediately entered into between Wolsey and the French resident at Paris; and plenipotentiaries were in the ensuing year sent over to England, with attendants and guards to the number of twelve hundred.

Bonnivet, admiral of France, was the principal envoy, and the ambassadors were received with great splendour, and with every demonstration of respect. The Earl of Surrey met them on Black-

heath, magnificently attired in a robe of silver tissue, with a great whistle round his neck, denoting his office of high admiral. The foreigners were first lodged in Taylors' Hall, but afterwards proceeded to Greenwich, where they passed some days in dancing and banquetting. Wolsey not only now relinquished his hostile views upon France, but began zealously to argue in favour of a treaty with that country, and even represented in council that the city of Tournay had already been an expensive conquest; and that little probability appeared of its ever becoming an useful or safe possession. These arguments (which, as Polydore Virgil remarks, would have been sound had they not sprung from the corruption and avarice of Wolsey), were well received, and were seconded by the Bishop of Durham. The Cardinal's motives in thus promoting the restitution of his foreign see, are not difficult to be accounted for, when it is considered, that in compensation for this sacrifice, he was allowed by the French government 12,000 livres per annum for life; and those members of the privy-council who argued in favour of the restitution, were also remunerated*, by orders of the French monarch. Nor was the sum of 600,000 crowns in compensation for Tournay

* *Herbert*, 75—78.

less acceptable to his master, who now began to find that his treasury was not inexhaustible. Besides this, an ample consideration was made for the citadel that Henry had erected at Tournay; and Wolsey, who understood well how to turn to account every advantage, gave particular instructions to his servants and officers to sell, to the greatest profit, the materials of other buildings which had been the work of the English monarch: the ammunition was also returned to England.* The Earl of Worcester, who, when Lord Herbert, had assisted by his valour and counsels in the conquest of Tournay, was commissioned to restore it to the French monarch; and with the spirit of a brave officer and zealous servant, he refused to allow the Marquis de Chastillon, the French commander, to enter the town with a banner unrolled, insisting on his bearing it furled, to denote that it was voluntarily yielded, and not subdued.

The restitution of Tournay was one of various articles in a treaty at this time concluded between England and France, the preliminaries of which had been secretly arranged between the Cardinal and the French ministers. Francis the First, aware of the importance that it was to

* *Strype*, vol. i. p. 34.

his interests to gain the favour of Wolsey, had, by unremitting attentions and bribes, succeeded in securing the regard of the proud favourite. This point was not, however, accomplished without a degree of condescension which appears ill suited to the dignity of a crowned head; and Wolsey received from the king of France the appellation of "lord," "father," "master," "guardian." Henry was little less flattered than his minister by the adulation paid to his servant; and when Wolsey, with pretended candour, shewed him the presents that he had received from the King of France, declaring that Francis had with these bribes attempted to corrupt him; that many servants would have concealed such gifts from their masters; but that he, being resolved to act with sincerity, exhibited them to Henry as a proof how much value was placed by foreign powers in the alliance with England *, Henry was gratified beyond measure at the greatness of a person whom he had raised from an obscure station; and, smiling, said "this Cardinal will govern both Francis and me."

All obstacles on the part of Wolsey being thus banished, a treaty was signed, which, in the opinion of Lord Herbert, merits particular attention as an excellent model for peace, and as affording the plan upon which the future con-

* *Lord Herbert.*

duct of Henry on similar occasions was formed. It will not, however, be here necessary to detail the articles of this treaty: it is sufficient to state that it included Francis and Henry as the heads, and Charles, the young king of Spain, Maximilian and Leo, if they choose, as contractors also. By this league a marriage was set on foot between the princess Mary, the only surviving child of Henry and of Katharine, then four years of age, and the dauphin of France, an infant of a year old.* The forfeiture of Tournay to the English was made the penalty of any infraction of this clause on the part of Francis; it was, however, never fulfilled. The young princess was supposed to take with her a dowry of three hundred thousand crowns, of which Francis was to acknowledge the implied receipt; but that prince, not being at that time able to pay the sums agreed upon for the restitution of Tournay, was obliged to dispatch to England six lords in hostage.

An interview between the two kings was likewise proposed, and some place between Boulogne and Calais specified as the proper place of their meeting. This interesting event was, however, delayed for some time by the death of Maximilian, emperor of Germany, in

* *Mezerai.*

the ensuing year. The obsequies of the emperor were solemnly celebrated at Saint Paul's cathedral; and scarcely were his remains cold, when intrigues and treaties were set on foot, concerning the election of a successor to the empire.

CHAP. VI.

Arrival of Campeggio in England. — Wolsey joined in the commission. — Entrance of the Legate into London. — Wolsey's increase of power; his indiscretion; he is reproved by Henry. — Mary proclaimed Princess of Wales. — Entertainment given to the French ambassadors. — Banquets in the reign of Henry the Eighth. — The masque. — The drama. — Lady Talboys. — Birth of Henry Fitzroy. — His early life connected with that of Surrey.

IN the course of this year a legate from the court of Rome arrived in England, for the double purpose of soliciting the assist-
1519. ance of this country against the Turks, and of correcting the notorious abuses in monastic institutions, which were now considered, even by the Roman pontiff, to require reformation. Campeggio, the cardinal who was deputed by Leo to fulfil this office, was not, however, deemed by the pope to be an efficient agent without the auxiliary influence of Wolsey, whose favour the legate was expressly commanded assiduously to cultivate. *

* *Fiddes's Life of Wolsey*, p. 203.

Campeggio was, however, detained at Calais by Wolsey, partly from motives of private interest, and in some measure from an anxiety to supply the legate with the means of entering the English metropolis in a manner suitable to his dignity.*

It was essential, in the opinion of Wolsey, that the man who was to act as his colleague, should appear with that degree of magnificence which was usual among the nobles of the English court, and which was emulated by all the higher orders of the clergy. The contrivances of Wolsey on this occasion are sufficiently amusing. Being apprized that the followers of Campeggio were poorly attired, he first supplied him, while at Calais, with a quantity of scarlet cloth, in order that his domestics might appear suitable to the important office with which the legate was entrusted, When the bull, conferring upon Wolsey a similar dignity, had actually arrived, Campeggio was permitted to cross the Straits of Dover, and proceeding to Blackheath, he was received with all due respect by the Duke of Norfolk, and many of the nobility. Here he withdrew into a tent, and invested himself with all the paraphernalia of episcopal grandeur. He then prepared to enter London upon a mule, that species of animal having

* *Herbert*, p. 79.

been formerly much used by the clergy on solemn occasions and in processions; and considered, in the reign of Henry, as a much more rare and valuable animal than the horse, which has since, to the credit of the English taste, obtained the preference.* Campeggio doubtless expected to complete his journey without further interference on the part of Wolsey; but in this he was mistaken; for Wolsey had prompt intelligence, not only of the arrival of the legate, but of his appearance and reception; and, judging from the representations of his informers, that the train of his colleague was still deficient in splendour, he dispatched from his own well-supplied stable twelve mules laden with coffers to complete the retinue of the Italian legate. Unfortunately these chests, which might be supposed to contain costly and choice presents, articles of rich apparel, or of plate, or jewels, being overturned by an accident, their contents were disclosed, and were found to consist of old garments and of broken meat and bread. This accident disconcerted the dignity of the whole procession, and excited the derision of the populace who are ever inclined to avail themselves

* In the inventory of Wolsey's goods, taken upon the confiscation of his property, his horses are valued at one pound seventeen shillings and sixpence each, and his mules at fifteen pounds each. *Anderson's Hist. of Comm.* vol. ii. p. 51.

of such opportunities for mirth.* Other humiliations awaited Campeggio, who, although a man of address and abilities, was constrained to bend obsequiously to the determined and arrogant temper of his brother in office. Not contented with assuming precedence on every occasion, it was also the successful endeavour of Wolsey to monopolize the entire direction of that reform which Campeggio had been deputed to commence among the monastic orders. Nor was this power the only favour which Wolsey required from the compliant hands of Leo: he was soon afterwards entrusted by the pontiff with the dispensation of all church laws in England during the space of a year. Yet was it not more surprizing that Leo should grant such a prerogative, than that Henry should permit his minister to exercise a supremacy which raised the servant above the master. Wolsey, appears too, on this occasion, to have lost that sagacity and discretion by which he had attained an influence, as serviceable in many respects to his country, as it was flattering to himself; and his new commission was a cause of offence and annoyance to the majority of the bishops, since they found that the reason assigned by the cardinal for desiring it, reflected upon the whole body of the clergy. The bull, delegating the

* *Hall*, p. 593.

office of reformation, speaks of the spiritual part of the kingdom as lost to all moral sense, and is even deemed, by the most noted historian* of that period, to be too infamous to the hierarchy to be expatiated upon at full length.

Under these circumstances it became the interest of Wolsey to demean himself with remarkable caution, and to adopt the most moderate measures that could be used to effect his purposes. Unfortunately for himself, and for this country, to whom his ministration was eminently useful, Wolsey, with all his great qualities, was deficient in prudence, and where his personal interests interfered, in probity. Invested with unbounded authority, dangerous to the human mind under any circumstances, but to one who had been elevated from an humble station a source of irresistible temptation, Wolsey, during this period of his legacy, gave his enemies ample opportunity, afterwards, to allege against him acts of undoubted illegality. He erected a legatine court, and appointed as president a man named John Allen, whose extortion and injustice occasioned great dissatisfaction. The archbishops complained, that the cardinal arrogated to himself the power of calling to account the executors of wills, and of monopolizing the registration and probation

* *Lord Herbert.*

of testaments, which were hitherto sources of great profit to the higher orders of the clergy.* Under pretence of reforming the corrupt members of the church, he called together many of the priests, and reprimanding them severely for their crimes and misdemeanours, threatened them with expulsion from the church unless they compounded by paying a sufficient sum of money. Those minions of the cardinal who were in orders, being provided by their rapacious master with such livings as fell vacant, whether they came under his presentation or belonged to other suffragans, loudly supported these acts of oppression, and menaced any persons who ventured to murmur with the charge of heresy. Wolsey, inebriated with power, was so much infatuated as to bestow benefices which were in the gift of the nobility; a privilege not even assumed by the pope. Some check, however, was given to his proceedings by the king, whom Warham, the acknowledged enemy of Wolsey, informed of these illegal measures; and to the representations of Wolsey's misconduct, emphatically stated by the venerable archbishop, Henry replied, "That he should not have heard of these misdemeanours but by him; for no man," he observed, "is so blind as in his own house;

* *Henry, Hist. Eng.* vol. xii. p. 11.

therefore," he added, "father, go to Wolsey, and tell him, if any thing be amiss, that he amend it." It may be easily supposed that Wolsey was displeased with the grave remonstrances of Warham, and that they offered additional causes for his dislike of that prelate: he moderated, however, the expressions of his wrath, conscious that the reproof was just, and aware that the temper of his sovereign would not brook an open defiance of his power. Shortly afterwards, his agent, John Allen, being accused of his illegal practices by one Fondon, a priest, the proceedings of Wolsey's court were brought still more to light, and were found to be so improper, that the king sent for the cardinal and reproved him severely; a circumstance from which the decline of Wolsey in the estimation of his sovereign may, if we can rely on the opinion of Lord Herbert, be confidently dated.*

The arrival of Bonnivet, high admiral of France, together with the bishop of Paris, and of other nobles, as ambassadors from Francis, was celebrated by festivities of the most animated description.† These distinguished foreigners were conducted from London to

* See *Lord Herbert*, p. 80.

† Hall does not fail to remark that they brought with them a great number of rascals, pedlars and jewellers, who brought over hats and caps, and other merchandize, which had not paid duty, in the ambassadors' coffers. *Hall*, p. 593.

Blackheath, where the number of their carriages amounted to twelve hundred, which was considered by those who entertained suspicions of the French, to be too numerous for an embassy. They were met by the Earl of Surrey, splendidly dressed in a coat of rich tissue cut on
Sept. 27. cloth of silver, and mounted on a courser richly caparisoned; from his side hung a whistle of gold, the badge of his high office, set with pearls, and hanging by a massive chain round his neck. The earl was followed by an hundred and forty gentlemen richly apparelled, on horseback; and this party, joining the train of the French ambassadors, proceeded through the city to Tailors' hall, where the principal foreigners were lodged. On the last day of September the French ambassadors took their barge, and went to Greenwich, where they were introduced into the presence of Henry, to whom the bishop of Paris made a long oration. As it was necessary for the ambassadors to continue in England until the treaty between Francis and Henry was concluded and sealed, the apartments of the queen became a scene of constant gaiety; the gentlemen in the train of the foreigners dancing and diverting themselves every day with Katharine and her ladies. When all matters of business were finished, the king, the ambassadors, and the two legates,

rode in state to the church of Saint Paul's, from the palace of the Bishop of Durham; and a scaffolding was raised, extending from the west entrance to the door of the choir, in order that the king and his company might be seen by the multitudes. Wolsey then performed high mass, standing on a platform of five feet high, and under his canopy of state; behind him was his *cupboard* set with covered and gilded basons. At the first lavatory, he was assisted by three earls; at the second by two dukes and a marquis, who afterwards served him with wine and wafers. When Campeggio and Wolsey had bestowed remission on the people, and Dr. Richard Pace had delivered an eloquent oration in praise of peace, the king and the ambassadors repaired to a costly entertainment at the house of the Bishop of London.

After this public exhibition of the homage which the proud aristocracy of England were thus constrained to offer to one whom they secretly envied and despised, Wolsey had the additional honour of receiving and of entertaining the king and his court, the French ambassadors, and a number of the nobility, at his palace. The puerile nature of those diversions with which the banquets of former days were interspersed or succeeded, appears more than usually manifest on this occasion; after partici-

pating in a sumptuous feast, the company diverted themselves for some time with a game of mumchance, a favourite mode of playing with dice, then much in fashion among the higher classes. During the pastime a party of masquers entered in pairs, followed by disguised knights carrying torches; and after dancing for some time, the maskers discovered themselves to the company, the king, as usual, and the dutchess of Suffolk, being foremost in the frolic. The admiral of France thanked the king heartily for this entertainment, which partook of the gaiety and frivolity of his own country, rather than of the gravity of the English nation. The festivities, however, did not end here; for Henry soon contrived an entertainment at Greenwich, into which he introduced a pageant representing a rock, on which were planted trees denoting the five principal potentates of Europe. England had her rose-tree; the Roman See, a branch of olive, not always, unhappily, justly emblematical of that power; the Imperial arms were surmounted by a pine-apple; those of Spain with a pomegranate tree; and those of France with a branch of lilies. On the summit of the rock sat a lady with a dolphin on her knee. A mock tournay next ensued; and the meaning of the whole spectacle was finally explained in French by a personage styled "Report," introduced from com-

pliment to the foreigners, to whom this pageant was intended to convey an assurance of the intentions of Henry with respect to the treaty.

When this pastime was concluded, the king and the ambassadors were served with a banquet, consisting of two hundred and forty dishes; and after the supper a "voyde," or dessert of spices served upon silver, was introduced. This night the entertainment was conducted with unusual grandeur: the cupboard in the hall was of twelve stages, and plate, an article only of recent introduction, even in the royal palaces, was abundant, there being no display of any vessels on the side-board, except those which were of genuine value.*

The subject of banquets is too closely connected with the habits of Henry and of his court, to be entirely passed over. Those of this reign were more celebrated for their splendour and profusion, than any which had been given or witnessed by the predecessors of Henry. In treating, therefore, of his amusements and customs in social life, it is requisite to have some acquaintance with the mode in which these entertainments were conducted, in order to form a correct idea of those pleasures in which this versatile prince delighted; — pleasures, from which many of the arts and improvements of modern

* *Hall*, p. 595.

times may be supposed, in a great measure, to have originated, which by dissipating the contents of the royal coffers led to important results, and to which the rapid advancement of commerce at this period has been, with justice, attributed.

There were few of the fashionable amusements of the day more likely to diminish the resources of the royal purse than the banquet of olden times. In the sixteenth century, it was usually an early supper, at six or seven o'clock in the evening, and was composed of the most substantial and costly viands that the royal parks or forests could supply: every festivity, every solemn occasion of business or of state, was closed by a feast, either at the hour of twelve, as a dinner, or early in the evening. Nor was it, in those chivalrous days, considered either well-bred or decorous to exclude the fair sex from participating in these convivialities, or to admit them merely to the tantalizing privilege of being spectators; the ladies of Henry's court obtained a share in this, as in every species of diversion, and were not only allowed to sit as guests at the feasts, but were thought to be essential members of the company. At the palace of Wolsey, Cavendish describes them as sitting alternately with the gallants of the court; and at the feast of the Serjeants, held at Ely House in the twenty-

third year of Henry's reign, Queen Katharine presided at the head of one table, and the king at another, in separate apartments.*

The party being assembled, and the king and queen seated in their chairs of state, it was the custom to begin the ceremonial of royal banquets by presenting hippocras and wafers to the sovereign and his consort. The dishes were then placed, and were frequently replenished, according to the quality and number of those assembled at the board; but the courses were always numerous, and included a considerable number and variety of viands.

It was about this period, that the substantial character of these repasts began to give place to a greater degree of elegance in the choice of provisions. Except venison, (sometimes eaten with furmenty), or pork stewed into broth, no butchers' meat was allowed to appear on table at the high-day festivals of the court, or at the palaces of the nobles†: but at city feasts, or at those purely ceremonial, the baron of beef, or even the spectacle of an entire carcase, was still permitted to gladden the eyes of the hungry. At the dinner before specified, which was declared to be little inferior to the feast of a coronation, it was deemed necessary to provide

* *Dugdale's Origines Judiciales*, p. 127.

† *Strutt's Manners and Customs*, vol. iii. p. 108.

twenty four great "beefes," one hundred fat "muttons," ninety one pigs, one carcase of an ox; besides fourteen dozen of swans, and other varieties of the feathered and finny tribe, too numerous to be detailed.* As the female members of a company are usually critics in the more delicate minutiæ of the culinary art, our ancestors did not fail to intersperse their banquets with intricate confectionary, in which their skill appears to have been by no means despicable. The "subtleties," so frequently specified by the chroniclers of the period, were devices made with jellies or sweetmeats, and placed in the centre of the table for ornament; and, in order to be consistent with that taste for symbolical display which then prevailed, they were frequently intended to convey particular meanings, couched in corresponding mottoes; a chain of gold, or a crown, according to the dignity of the president of the feast, usually surmounting these skilful contrivances. Between the courses, and after the feast, the attendants presented to the company services of fruit, butter, spiced cakes, hard cheese and sweet-meats; and in these intervals the introduction of music and songs filled up the pauses in conversation; and pageants, mummings, and dancing, were sometimes contrived to vary the monotonous pleasures of the table. †

* *Dugdale's Judiciales*, p. 127.

† *Strutt's Manners and Customs*, vol. iii. p. 110.

In enumerating the luxuries of the ancient banquet, it must not be supposed that wine, that requisite of convivial scenes, was wanting to complete its allurements. We have seen in what profusion the Rhenish wines were distributed to the multitudes who thronged to view the festivities of the court, on various public occasions; and it may easily be supposed how common the use of such an article must have been, to have authorized so liberal a distribution to the populace. The consumption of wine, although prodigious, appears, however, to have, been regulated in the houses of our nobility and monarchs, with scrupulous attention to economy, notwithstanding the low value of those most in general use. Henry the Eighth bestowed considerable attention upon the article of wine, and by several statutes endeavoured to restrain the increased prices of "malmsey, romaneis, or rumney, sack, and other sweet wines," which were fixed at twelve pence the gallon, sixpence the bottle, three-pence the half pint, &c. upon pain of forfeiting three shillings and four-pence for every gallon sold at a higher sum. Moreover, the Lords Chancellor and Treasurer, the President of the Council, the Lord Privy Seal, and two justices were appointed to fix the valuation of all wines in gross; and this commission was afterwards by act of Parliament extended to the

power of mitigating or enhancing the prices of wines, sold also by retail.*

The wines most in use at this period appear to have been Malmsey, Rhenish, and the wines of Gascony and of Guienne; which last were introduced into England at the time when part of the French dominions surrendered to the British arms†; besides these, it has been decided that the Champagne vintage was already in great repute, and among others who estimated its productions, Henry the Eighth is numbered, and is even stated to have held one of the vineyards of Ay in his own hands‡; sack, that still unexplained object of antiquarian inquiry, was also one of the luxuries of this age. At coronations or banquets, it was, however, invariably the custom to dilute the genuine wines, and to cover the harshness and acidity which they possessed by mixing them with honey or with spices.‡ "Thus compounded," says a modern writer on the subject, "they passed under the generic name of piments, because they were originally prepared by the *pigmentarii* or apothecaries, and they were used much in the same manner as the *liqueurs* of modern times." The varieties of piment chiefly introduced at the banquets of our kings, were hippocras, so called

* *Henderson's History of Ancient and Modern Wines*, p. 293.
† *Henderson*, p. 293. ‡ Ibid.

from the bag termed "Hippocrates' sleeve," through which it was strained; and clarry, or clarre, a claret, or mixed wine, mingled with honey, and frequently drunk as a composing draught, by persons who were on the point of retiring to rest.* These beverages, especially hippocras, were deemed too expensive to be distributed on ordinary occasions, nor do they appear from the accounts given by our chroniclers, to have been presented more than once during the feast. Metheglin or mead, braket, a composition of ale or honey, and ale, a very ancient drink in this country, were chiefly used for private persons and domestics. †

Such were some of the attractions of those festive scenes, which, comprehending the diversions of dancing, gaming, music, the personation of fantastic characters, and the banquet, obtained the general denomination of Masques.‡ Of these amusements, the two first were abandoned at an early period by Henry, whose increasing corpulency soon rendered him unable to encounter competition with his young courtiers in the mazes of the dance; while his prudence forbade him long to indulge in the dangerous interest excited by games of hazard. During the early

* *Henderson*, p. 285.

† *Strutt's Manners and Customs*, vol. iii. p. 74.

‡ *Warton*, vol. iii.

years of his reign, Henry had indeed delighted greatly in games of dice, and in tennis; but finding that some persons about him took advantage of his ardent and incautious temper, to introduce to him various Lombards and Frenchmen, professed gamblers, who won large sums from him, he had resolution for a time to relinquish a pastime which occasioned him so much mortification.* The masque, however, retained his partiality to a later period. As a distinctive portion of the amusement, Henry the Eighth has had the undeserved credit of being its first promoter in this country; but this error, which has originated from a passage in the chronicle of Hall, has been satisfactorily confuted by various intelligent antiquaries. According to the account given by Hall, "the king, with twelve others, on the day of the Epiphanie, in the third year of his reign, performed an entertainment, after the manner of Italye, called a maske, a thing not seene before in Englande: he and his attendants were apparelled in garmentes, long and brode, wrought on with gold, with visers, and cappes of gold." It appears, however, notwithstanding the statement of this historian, that the vizor, or masque, was frequently used in the court plays, or *ludi*, even as early as the reign of Edward the Third; and that it had be-

* *Hall.*

come* so prevalent an article of attire in the reign of Henry the Seventh, that it was considered necessary, by that monarch, to enact a law constituting it felony for any person "to hunt by night with painted faces or vizors." It has been, therefore, with much appearance of probability, conjectured, either that the Italian mask mentioned by Hall, differed from the visors formerly worn in this species of entertainment, or that the name of mask was at that time first bestowed on this mode of disguising the countenance.†

The imitation of Italian manners and accomplishments gave a colouring even to the daily habits of those who affected refinement; and the ladies, under "whose fostering care" all absurdities are usually thought to flourish, began about this æra to adopt the use of the mask, a custom which was far more suitable to intrigue, seeking a screen in order to provoke curiosity, than to modesty which requires no concealment, because harbouring no designs. Stubbes, in his "Anatomie of Abuses," inveighs bitterly against those women who had adopted the fashion of wearing masks or mufflers, the former of velvet, "wherewith," he remarks, "when they ride abroad they cover all their faces, having holes made in them against their

* *Warton, Hist. Poet.* vol. i. p. 236.

† *Strutt's Manners and Customs*, vol. iii. p. 145.

eyes, whereout they looke. So that if a man that knew not their guise before, should chaunce to meet one of them, he would think he met a devil, for face he can shew none, but two broad holes against their eyes, with glasses in them."*

Although we cannot ascribe the introduction of the masque, as an entertainment, into England to this reign, it may, however, be admitted, that it was practised with greater frequency, and performed with greater splendour, in the court of Henry the Eighth, than in that of any of his predecessors. The increased popularity of this diversion may probably be attributed to the prevalent custom of visiting foreign countries, and Italy in particular, where the residence of the Pope attracted many of the nobility from the other European states, and where it was considered that not only learning, but politeness, held her throne. As a recreation, the "masque" was of too pantomimic a nature to interest the attention of intellectual spectators; notwithstanding that shew of converse which Hall so often denominates "a parley," it was in dumb shew; and the characters, which were arranged with little attention to propriety or to nature, were usually connected with pageantry, equally inconsistent and frivolous. This diversion, as well as inter-

* *Anatomie of Abuses*, p. 59.

lūdes and other dramatic representations, was generally performed in the banquetting hall of a palace or castle, during the intervals of the feast, while the guests remained at the table.* Towards the middle and the close of this reign, the formalities of the hall, including these spectacles, fell into disuse, from the discontinuance of the ceremonials of the banquet †; the king, probably from satiety, or from the cares of a mind engaged in more serious pursuits, having become weary of mere spectacle. A more rational mode of pastime beguiled the hours of royal relaxation, and the drama, perhaps the most instructive, and certainly the most attractive, species of diversion with which society is acquainted, now began to assume its exalted station. It has been well observed, "that the manners and the poetry of a country are so nearly connected, that they throw light on each other‡;" and the remark applies equally to history, which is indebted for much of its authenticity to that minute inquiry into the details of prevailing customs, which our most valued writers have thought worthy of their attention.

The origin of sacred comedy has been traced to the anxiety of the French and English merchants to attract customers to the fairs, by

* *Strutt*, vol. iii. p. 143. † *Warton*, vol. iii. p. 158.
‡ Ibid.

which commerce, in the time of William the Conqueror, was usually supported both in England and on the continent. At first profane mummeries were exhibited by the jugglers and minstrels who accompanied the traders, as a bait to allure customers; but in process of time the clergy, observing the popularity and influence of these shows, and finding that they diverted the people from religious observances, took the drama into their own hands, and endeavoured to render it a vehicle of religious instruction. Hence the origin of those sacred comedies, denominated mysteries, the plot of which consisted in stories from scripture or sacred legends, and were represented in churches, instead of theatres, and by monks as actors.* Nor were the narratives upon which these dramas were composed, selected only from those parts of the Bible which might without impiety or indecency be rendered subservient to the rational amusement and instruction of spectators; the most solemn subjects were introduced, and parodied by the ignorance and bad taste of the dramatists, who soon perceived that the most mysterious and sublime topics of revealed religion excited the strongest interest in the beholders. The anxiety which all descriptions of persons soon manifested to witness exhibitions which the

* *Warton*, vol. ii. 367.

better taste of modern times, and the purer feelings produced by reformed opinions, would now lead us to condemn as profane, was owing, in a great measure to the increased curiosity which all classes of the laity then felt respecting the scriptures, of which they were unjustly deprived. In the present state of refined society we should regard with disgust such subjects for public exhibition as the 'Passion of our Saviour,' 'The resurrection of Lazarus,' Simon the Leper,' 'Baptism and Temptation,' 'The Tragedy of God's Promises,' or many others, of such solemn import as scarcely to be deemed fit themes of general conversation. But in the reign of Henry, comedies of this description, written by the celebrated Bale, before his conversion from popery, were in the highest degree popular; and one, in particular, which treated of the "Three laws of Nature, Moses, and Christ, corrupted by the Sodomites, Pharisees, and Papists," was so well received even after the beginning of the Reformation, that it was reprinted in the reign of Elizabeth. "To those," observes Warton, "who are accustomed to contemplate the great picture of human follies, which the unpolished ages of Europe hold up to our view, it will not appear surprising, that the people, who were forbidden to read the events of sacred history in the Bible, should at the same time be permitted to see

them represented on the stage, disgraced with the grossest improprieties, corrupted with inventions and additions of the most ridiculous kind, sullied with impurities, and expressed in the language and gesticulations of the lowest farce." * The length of these spectacles, even with the most liberal allowance for an alteration in the public taste, must have been wearisome; and a performance entitled "the Creation of the World," and lasting eight days, excites our admiration of the patience of our forefathers. †

That the tendency of these representations must have been to diminish devotional sentiments, and to endow Christianity with the semblance of Paganism, cannot be denied; at the same time, with all their evils, some benefits must be allowed to have resulted from the stage, even in this state of depravity. By substituting peaceful enjoyments for the pleasures of the chace and the turbulence of tournaments, the mysteries paved the way for the popularity which intellectual pursuits now began to acquire. They established more social feelings than could be diffused among riotous sports, where the excellence of an individual depends upon his skill in humiliating, and even injuring his adversary. They were even of use to the morals of their hearers, especially when under the more modern

* *Warton*, vol. ii. p. 274. † In 1409, See *Stowe's Survey*.

form of Moralities, which they began to assume; and in this respect were the more efficacious, as, at that period, the pulpit conveyed little of practical instruction. Towards the close of this reign, however, mysteries were not only on the decline, from the improvement of the public taste, but were actually forbidden by Bonner, bishop of London, in his injunctions to the clergy, as tending to profanity; and the performance of classical plays was happily substituted for these absurdities. This improvement was one of the many advantages resulting from the succession of pleasures and novelties with which the court of Henry was continually enlivened, and was introduced by Henry in order to amuse the hostages sent by Francis to guarantee the payment of the sums which he had promised to pay to the English monarch for the restitution of Tournay. "The king," says Holinshed, "used familiarly these foure hostages, and on the seventh of Maie prepared a
1520. disguising, and caused his great chamber at Greenwich to be staged, and great lights to be set on pillors that were gilt, with basons gilt, and the roofe was covered with blue satin, set full of presses of fine gold and flowers; and under was written, 'Jammés;' the meaning whereof was, that the flower of youth could not be oppressed. Into this chamber came the king

and the queene, with the hostages, and there was a goodly comedie of Plautus plaied; and that doone, there entered into the chamber eight ladies in blacke velvet bordered about with gold, with *hoops*, from the wast downward, and sleeves ruffed and plited at the elbow, and plaine in the middest, full of cuts, pluchede out at every cut with fine camerike, and tired like the Ægyptians personages in long gownes of taffata set with flowers of gold bullion, and under that apparell cotes of blacke velvet embrodered with golde all to cut, and pluched out with cuts of white sarcenet, and every man had buskins of blacke velvet full of agglets of gold." After this minute and almost incomprehensible description of the attire of the company, the historian goes on to say, "that after the eight men had danced with the eight ladies, all of them in vizors, they cast off their upper garments, and their masks, and discovered among the rest the king, the Duke of Suffolk, and his dutchess, who were also present at the performance of the play."*

Before we dismiss this subject, which can hardly be considered as an unnecessary digression, it is natural to inquire who were the usual performers in the regular drama? It has already been remarked, that the characters, divine or

* *Holinshed*, p. 636.

human, in the mysteries, were personated by monks; and a religious fraternity, entitled "The Society of Parish Clerks of London," must also claim the honour of having assisted in these performances, which they usually exhibited at Clerkenwell, so called from that circumstance.* The moralities, which were in the highest vogue in the reign of Henry the Seventh, were usually presented by the eleemosynary boys or choristers of a monastery, who, from their practice of walking, and even of speaking in the pageantry of the many festivals of the church, soon acquired some degree of proficiency in the histrionic art. Accordingly, when our kings went on their progresses, a select number of these boys, chosen from those of the chapel royal, attended the royal movements, carrying with them vestments, wings, vizors, and other implements necessary for their purpose. As learning increased, and especially when classic literature was revived, the practice of acting plays extended from the monasteries to public seminaries, and eventually to Inns of Court, with this difference, that Latin comedies were substituted for the verbose dramas which had before occupied the public.† It was naturally to be expected that the higher ranks, especially with the example of the king, himself an excellent classic, having once enjoyed the

* *Warton*, ii. 394. † *Warton*, vol. ii. p. 397.

superior pleasures derived from these performances, would quickly discard their former actors with contempt and disapprobation. Accordingly we find Henry, towards the close of his reign, issuing orders that only a small number of the singing boys should attend his progress *: the plays of Terence and of Plautus soon became fashionable at court, and even persons of the most exalted rank did not deem it beneath their dignity to take a part in these dramas.

It was about this period that the decline of those attentions, which the king had
1519. manifested to Katharine during the first years of their union, became apparent to the public. The queen had experienced severe trials in the loss of several children, who had all, with the exception of the princess Mary, either died soon after their birth, or had been still-born. To aggravate the disappointment of the king, it had happened that two of these infants had been boys, one of whom, born in 1510, had lived only a few months; the other in 1514, had not remained even so long in the world, to sustain the hopes of the king respecting the succession.† The queen had now, also, for some

* Ibid. vol. iii. p. 158.

† Burnet allows Katharine of Arragon to have had three children only; he asserts, her constitution was injured by re-

time ceased to bear children, and Henry, in despair of male issue, had caused the princess Mary to be proclaimed Princess of
1518. Wales at Ludlow, and to hold her court there.*

It was scarcely to be expected that a prince of the violent passions which Henry manifested, should acquire so great a degree of self-government in one respect, as should enable him to remain faithful to a wife whom he no longer loved, and with whom he soon ceased to maintain a more intimate communication than that which the ceremonies of the court required.

Free from the turmoils of war, and ex-
1519. empted by Wolsey from the fatigues of state business, of which that minister took the whole responsibility, the king, amid a constant succession of amusements, had both opportunity and temptation to trifle with the ladies of the court; and it was, therefore, the more extraordinary that so few deviations on his part, from moral obligations, have been charged against him, even by those who seem inclined to place the actions of this monarch in the worst point

peated disappointments. *Burnet*, vol. i. p. 65. Lingard, on the authority of Sanders and of Cardinal Pole, expressly states that the queen had *five* children, three sons and two daughters. *Lingard, Hist. Eng.* vol. vi. p. 150.

* *Burnet*, vol. i. p. 65.

of view. As no instance of conjugal infidelity on his part, during the first eleven years of his reign, has been recorded by historians, it must be inferred that such deviations from virtue were at least not very frequent, nor continued for any length of time. Ridiculous, however, as the assertion may appear, the importance which Henry attached to a strict observance of the marriage tie was displayed, during the whole course of his life, by his strict injunctions to the members of his household, whose morals he endeavoured to improve, by discountenancing the encouragement of "vain or loose women" about the court; and to whom he held forth promises of pensions and of presents upon their entering the connubial state. With regard to his own conduct, it has been well observed, that this monarch committed greater sins in endeavouring not to infringe the marriage vow, than would have been the consequence of such connexions as that which at this time shook the foundations upon which the happiness of his married life was supported.

Elizabeth Blunt, the daughter of Sir John Blunt, and afterwards the wife of Sir Gilbert Talboys, "was thought," says Lord Herbert, "to be the beauty and mistress-piece of her time;" and, "as all recommendable parts concurred in the king's person, and as they

again were exalted in his high dignity and valour," it may seem not singular in any station of life, and certainly not in that which is raised above the fear of common censure, if frequent association in scenes too well calculated to dissipate serious reflections, should prove dangerous to those whom nature had so lavishly favoured. Little information has transpired respecting the origin and continuance of this amour; a new rival to the unfortunate Katharine quickly banishing the transient favourite of Henry from her dishonourable distinction. A son, however, who afterwards became the pride and solace of his father when despairing of a legitimate heir, was the result of this connexion. This child, to whom the king gave the name of Henry Fitzroy, (a surname which has so often been serviceable on similar occasions,) was born at the priory of Blackamore in Essex, and was openly
1519. avowed by the king, to whom he was thought to bear considerable resemblance. As he grew up young Fitzroy displayed so much of the beauty of his mother, united to the talents and manly powers of his father, that Henry resolved to raise him to such a rank as would be suitable to one who might one day inherit the crown, in case of no further male

* Fuller hints, in speaking of the will of Henry the Eighth, that it was well for Mary and Elizabeth that Henry Fitzroy

issue*; and accordingly, when Henry
1525. Fitzroy had attained his sixth year, he was installed a knight of the garter, and created Earl of Nottingham, Duke of Richmond and Somerset, Lieutenant general beyond Trent, Warden of the borders of Scotland, and shortly afterwards, Admiral of England.*

The history of the short life permitted to this "child of Henry's affection" is too closely connected with one upon whose romantic career imagination delights to linger, to allow a separate narrative of their destinies. The companion assigned to the childhood of Fitzroy was Henry Howard, afterwards the Earl of Surrey, a youth somewhat younger than the Duke of Richmond, and, like that nobleman, allied to royalty; a dangerous distinction in those days of jealousy and distrust.

The descent of Surrey, however, although not immediately derived from royalty, was far more honourable than the near, yet equivocal connection that united Henry Fitzroy to the sovereign. Few families, indeed, could boast of a more spotless origin than that of Howard, anciently denominated Holdward†; and the later members

was dead, otherwise we might have heard of a king Henry IX., so great was the king's affection towards him, and his power to prefer him. *Fuller*, p. 243.

* *Herbert*, p. 165. † *Verstegan, of Decayed Intelligence.*

of this noble line, in the reign of Henry, had contributed to add splendour to their house and name. The grandfather of Henry Howard had been elevated, as we have seen, to the dukedom of Norfolk, in gratitude for his services
1513. on the field of Flodden; and the regard of Henry for this valiant peer was further evinced by the unwillingness which the king expressed to comply with the repeated petition of the duke that he might be allowed to retire from court, on account of his increasing age and infirmities. At length, the instances of Norfolk being on one occasion reiterated to the king at Richmond, Henry consented to receive from him his staff of office, as Lord Treasurer of England; at the same time telling the duke that he should deliver it where he thought it best bestowed; and calling to Thomas Howard, Earl of Surrey, who was then playing at bowls upon the green, he placed it in his hands.*
1522. By the death of his father in 1524, the Earl of Surrey became Duke of Norfolk, retaining still a high station in the favour of the king; but while external circumstances appeared to favour the advancement of his family, the house of this nobleman was divided by dissensions which were ultimately the source of his ruin.

* *Grainger's Biog. Hist.* vol. i. p. 44.

Upon becoming a widower, from the death of his first wife, Anne Plantagenet, a daughter of Edward the Fourth, the duke, then Lord Thomas Howard, had solicited the hand of Lady Elizabeth Stafford, daughter of the Duke of Buckingham, almost immediately after his having obtained the freedom to make a fresh choice. Lord Thomas was forty, and the lady whom he addressed fifteen years of age, when he gained the consent of her father to the union; yet this disparity was not the only obstacle, for Elizabeth had already bestowed her affections upon Ralph Nevil, Earl of Westmorland, and with the approbation of her parents had plighted her faith to that nobleman. At this period, unfortunately, marriage was considered merely as a bargain, the only object of which was to add wealth or consequence to the families allied; and the Duke of Buckingham, the proudest and most magnificent subject that ever flourished in this country, could not resist the advantages which such an union appeared to offer, with so rising a family as the Howards. He broke off the match with the Earl of Westmorland, who consoled himself by marrying Lady Catherine, the younger sister of Elizabeth, who was immediately united, against her will, to Surrey, and thus sacrificed to ambition.

From this ill-assorted union the misfortunes which afterwards befell the Howards may pro-

bably be derived. The Countess of Surrey was a woman of violent passions; her husband a man of licentious habits; and domestic broils ensued, which ended in the ruin of the "divided house." Surrey was, however, removed early from the evil influence which the display of unsocial and unamiable tempers necessarily have on a young and pliant mind.* It has been repeatedly asserted that he passed his childhood in Windsor Castle, with Henry Fitzroy as his playmate and fellow student; it appears from his own poems that some of his juvenile days were spent at that truly royal abode†; and that a mind of so chivalrous a character as that of Surrey was aided in its bias to great and noble sentiments by the localities of a residence so eminently calculated to inspire associations of a similar nature, is an agreeable and probable supposition. The days of Surrey's childhood were, however, passed alternately at Kenninghall in Norfolk, at Tendring Hall in Suffolk, and at Hunsdon in Hertfordshire; the two former

* *Nott's Life of Surrey*, p. 10.

† *Warton, Hist. Eng. Poet*, vol. iii. p. 3.

"So cruel prison how could betide, alas!
"As proud Windsor? where I in lust and joy,
"With a king's son my childish days did pass,
"In greater feast than Priam's sons of Troy."

Surrey's Poems, Nott's edit. 4to. p. 48.

belonging to the Duke of Norfolk, the latter, a house built by Henry the Eighth for the purpose of educating his children; while Richmond, in consequence of his nominal offices of lieutenant-general of the North, and warden of the Scottish marches, passed much of his time at the princely castle of Sheriff Hutton in Yorkshire, whither he was attended by a council, to take the administration of his public and private affairs.

The exact time that Richmond remained at Sheriff Hutton is uncertain, and the particular individuals who directed his studies there are not precisely ascertained. By a letter, supposed to have been written in his eleventh year, addressed to the king, and thanking him for the care which was bestowed upon his education, he appears to have profited by the course of tuition pursued, for the epistle is creditable to his proficiency. The business of the situation which Richmond held in the North was conducted chiefly by Dr. Magnus, a person who was frequently employed, during the course of this reign, in negociations at the Scottish courts.

The preceptor of Surrey is also uncertain, although conjectured to have been either the celebrated Leland, librarian to Henry the Eighth, or the learned Hadrian Junius, who afterwards became physician in his own household. It is also singular that both the English Univer-

sities may be said to have some claim to the honour of having received as students the Duke of Richmond and his celebrated friend; but the presumption is in favour of Cambridge.* In that seat of learning, the Duke of Richmond received the instructions of Dr. Richard Croke, the celebrated successor of Erasmus, as Greek professor, who had formerly acquired his own proficiency in that language under Grocyn at Oxford. Croke was eminently qualified to be the tutor of two promising youths from his excellence as a classical scholar, which was so remarkable as to procure him afterwards the office of public reader at the University of Leipsic, where he was the first person who taught Greek.† On his return to this country, induced by the entreaties of his friend Fisher, Bishop of Rochester, Croke resided for some years at Cambridge, as public orator and Greek professor; but, when the endowment of Wolsey's college at Oxford was in contemplation, Croke was preferred to be one of the canons in that splendid foundation. Under auspices so favourable, the minds of these youths received the first principles of learning; and every desirable impression, setting forth the attractions of knowledge in the most agreeable light, was

* *Nott's Life of Surrey*, p. 21.

† *Knight's Life of Erasmus*, p. 70.

confirmed by frequent and intimate association with men of the first abilities. But as their studies would in that day have been deemed incomplete, without the addition of that refinement and of those accomplishments which a foreign education affords, after remaining two years at an English University, the two friends repaired to Paris, whence it was probably intended that they should continue their travels together into Italy.

The sedulous attention bestowed upon the attainments of these noble youths may seem at variance with the custom of the day, which prescribed athletic and martial sports as the essential points to be regarded in the culture of the juvenile mind. It has been shown how honourable a place intellectual pursuits held in the estimation of Henry; and they were insisted upon as objects of the first importance in the instruction of all his children. The Howard family were also distinguished for their literary attainments, and for their attention to any display of ability which might be manifested by their children. The Duke of Norfolk was also a patron of learned men; two noted works were dedicated to him — Hardinge's Chronicle, and Andrewe Borde's Breviarie of Health, the oldest medical work in the English language, printed in 1547 *: and the dutchess appreciated the talents of the poet

* *Collett's Relics of Literature*, p. 3.

Shelton, who praised her "as the admirer and friend of the muses." Besides these domestic incentives to acquire knowledge, Surrey could boast of a near connection with most of the few among the nobles who devoted some portion of their leisure to poetry or letters. Among these, one of the most celebrated was Bouchier, Lord Berners, a soldier and an author, and in both capacities much esteemed by Henry the Eighth: by whose command he had translated the Chronicles of Froissart into English; and he had also enriched the English collection of romances by several translations from the Spanish, French, and Italian writers. This nobleman was connected with Surrey by a marriage with his aunt; he left no legitimate sons, and the title was continued in the female line. With good fortune, singular in the reign of Henry, Lord Bouchier preserved the favour of his sovereign to the close of his life. He was intrusted with several offices of importance, being appointed captain of the pioneers at the siege of Therouenne, and afterwards governor of Calais. *

Another relation of the Howard family was Parker, Lord Morley, the translator of several of Plutarch's lives, and the author subsequently of a comparison between Henry the Eighth and king Agesilaus, a work which he dedicated to

* *Dugdale's Baronage*, p. 132.

Secretary Cromwell. Parker also rendered several theological works of Aquinas and Areus into English.* At this period, a very considerable portion of literary fame was even acquired by the effort to establish a reputation for learning; Lord Thomas Stafford, a cousin of Surrey, has likewise been specified as another of those persons to whose example the emulation of the young poet may be ascribed; but the fame of this nobleman rests upon some obscure poems of little merit, which none but the ingenious Mr. Walpole have known how to appreciate. The accomplished and unfortunate George Bullen, Earl of Rochford, another relation of Surrey, has left some indications of an elegant taste, and of refined feelings, which must not be despised in speaking of an age so partially enlivened by the effusions of genius. This unfortunate victim of perjured evidence, the brother of Anne Bullen, was adored at court for "his admirable discourse, and his symmetry of person." One ballad is identified to be justly his; a strain of mournful sweetness, reminding the reader of the style of Surrey's compositions, with which those of Rochford are supposed to have been mingled.†

From these instances of literary acquirements among the nobles who were connected with

* *Walpole's Royal and Noble Authors*, vol. i. p. 313.

† *Walpole*, vol. i. p. 250.

Surrey, it may cease to be a matter of surprise, that the minds of Surrey and of his friend were so early directed to study; but it may reasonably be asked, how the extensive education which these youths obtained could have been completed at so early an age as that of fourteen or fifteen, at which period they certainly ceased to be under tuition.

The cares of instruction were at this period begun, and consequently discontinued, at a very early age; it was no uncommon practice for a boy to enter a college at fourteen, and at seventeen he was considered as qualified to marry, and to take a part in public business, or in military affairs. Accordingly, we not only find the studies of Richmond and of Surrey professedly terminated at this time of their lives, but their parents concerting for them matrimonial connexions with females of still more tender years; Richmond, after his re-
1533. turn from France, being affianced to the lady Mary Howard, the sister of Surrey; and Surrey, to the lady Frances Vere, daughter of the Earl of Oxford, one of the most affluent and powerful nobles of the kingdom. Here the history of Richmond's short career terminates, little of much interest afterwards transpiring about him; but at this point the romance of Surrey's life begins, unlike that of most heroes,

who are usually discarded by the muse of poetry, or of romance, when they have entered into the connubial state.

Little has transpired respecting the partner with whom Surrey was destined to pass his short, but memorable life; she bore him, indeed, five children, and she appears to have continued upon terms of affection with her husband until his untimely death. A connection formed in boyhood to accommodate the interests, and to comply with the commands of parents, may have ensured the domestic happiness of Surrey, but it was not of a character sufficiently romantic, to be the object upon which his imagination could dwell with poetic fervour. Fortunately for the credit of his morality, the fashion of the day, derived from the seductive example of Petrarch, and consonant with the sentiments of chivalry still lingering in every heroic breast, then authorized the poet or the knight in addressing his vows, his complaints, and his devoted services to one lady, while his faith, and perhaps his heart, were irrevocably engaged to another. Tasso and Petrarch had rendered a delusive and dangerous semblance of love fascinating to all who are capable of being swayed by the charms of poetry. James the Fourth of Scotland, and the Chevalier Bayard, dedicated trophies of victory to women already married, whose husbands thought them-

selves honoured by the avowal. The imaginations of men, and not the passions, were affected by the perfections of the adulated being to whom this homage was addressed. It was, therefore, designated by the term Platonic.

In the attachment of Surrey to the fair Geraldine, circumstances have been adduced to prove that the feelings of the poet were actually and sensibly excited by genuine, but hopeless love. It was long, indeed, a matter of some doubt whether this idol of his fancy ever really existed; until Mr. Walpole interpreted a passage in the poems of Surrey, in which, as if prophetic of the embarrassments of succeeding commentators, the poet has given ample details of the lineage of his fair one. The Lady Geraldine, according to a recent biographer of her lover*, was Elizabeth, daughter of Gerald Fitz-Gerald, the ninth Earl of Kildare, whose ancestors were descended from the Geraldi of Florence. Her mother, the daughter of the Marquis of Dorset, claimed kindred to the blood-royal, as half niece to Elizabeth, mother of Henry the Eighth, to whom her father was half brother. Although illustrious in birth, Geraldine, or more properly the Lady Elizabeth Fitz-Gerald, was the child of misfortune. Her father, Lord Deputy of Ireland, after a life of turmoil from the factions of that country, died in the Tower of grief, in conse-

* *Dr. Nott.*

quence of the rebellion of his son, Lord Thomas Fitz-Gerald, against the English authority. Of the two brothers of Lady Elizabeth, one, Lord Thomas, no less remarkable for his beauty of person than for his powerful abilities, was executed at Tyburn for treason, with five of his uncles, in 1536; the other, Gerald, was left in the hands of strangers, and encountered many dangers and hardships. * The mother of Lady Elizabeth, the Countess of Kildare, was reduced to the greatest distress, and became a frequent pensioner on the bounty of Henry the Eighth. Elizabeth Fitz-Gerald herself was brought into England while an infant, and placed by the compassion of Henry in the household of the Princess Mary, at Hunsdon, where she was carefully reared, according to the account of him to whose strains she owed her celebrity, "with kinges childe, and tasted costly food;" and where too, as increasing years brought increasing discernment, she probably felt the miseries of a dependance upon royal favour. It was in this situation, painful to herself, but interesting to the compassionate mind, that Surrey first beheld the Lady Elizabeth Fitz-Gerald, or as he poetically designated her, the fair Geraldine, and he had ample opportunities to watch the development of her personal and

* *Holinshed's Chronicle of Ireland*, p. 305.

mental charms in his frequent visits to Hunsdon with the Duke of Richmond, with whom he then chiefly resided at Windsor. Geraldine was at this time only thirteen years of age, and Surrey had attained his twenty-third year; his adoration of her childish beauty, and probably still more childish mind, may excite the wonder even of the most romantic; but we cannot learn but with surprise, that to the homage of such a man, licensed as it was by the fashion of the day, an humble dependant upon royalty should have evinced so little sensibility.

The history of Surrey's public life, his valour, and his sufferings, will necessarily be resumed in the course of that narrative of which the annals of our admirable chroniclers form a considerable portion. Of the fair Geraldine, before this long digression is concluded, some brief notice is necessary.

From the poems of Surrey it appears that she was inexorable to his passion, which, in all probability, had more of the poetic than of the amorous in its nature. At the period when Surrey was inspired with this sentiment, Geraldine constantly attended the Princess Mary to court, and it was at Hampton palace that Surrey first beheld her.* She is also supposed to have been maid of honour to Queen Katharine Howard.† At the

* *Nott's Life of Surrey*, p. 123. † *Warton*, vol. iii. p. 6.

early age of fifteen, she was sacrificed at the shrine of interest, by marrying Sir Anthony Browne, a courtier, sixty years old, who died six years after their union, and Geraldine became the third wife of Henry Clinton, Earl of Lincoln, whom she survived.* Little more of her life has been transmitted to us, than that she attended the coronation of Queen Mary dressed in white satin, and her horses in trappings of the same; with other court details, which mark her career as "dull and dignified," and characterize the tenour of her days as the reverse of those tumultuous and heroic scenes in which her gallant and ill-fated admirer was distinguished.

The name of Geraldine has been perpetuated to the present day, but the triumphs of her charms were evanescent, as those of other beloved, and lovely objects. In 1593, we find her designated by the poet Churchyard, as "old Lincoln," when describing the ladies attendant on queen Elizabeth.

Old Lincoln now, that stands on mighty mount,
Yet low in earth the first foundation lies,
He drew for that it was of great account,
And lifted up in favour to the skies.
The best we know did love old Lincoln well,
In former age her beauty did excel;
Of latter times her credit was not small,
For some do say that Lincoln passed them all.

* *Nott*, p. 120.

In 1589 the once fair countess was borne to her grave by sixty-one old women; and as it was formerly the custom that the number of those who sustained the coffin should mark the age of the defunct, she had, of course, completed her sixtieth year.

CHAP. VII.

Projected interview between Henry and Francis I. — Contest for the Imperial Crown. — Charles V. elected. — The English Nobility in France. — Their light conduct. — Familiarity on their return with Henry. — His Minions discarded. — Masque of old Courtiers. — Amusements devised for the French Hostages. — The arrival of Charles the Fifth in England. — The purpose of his visit not effected. — Henry passes to Calais. — Field of the Cloth of Gold. — Instance of caprice in Henry's subsequent interview with the Emperor.

THE chivalric character which still distinguished the English nobility, now received a new stimulus, from the celebrated interview between the kings of France and England, which occurred during this year. This event had been delayed by the death of Maximilian, Emperor of Germany, and the wishes of the three principal potentates of Europe had been too eagerly directed towards the success of their separate interests, in a competition for the Imperial throne, to dwell upon points of inferior moment. This contest could not have taken place, but for a circumstance, apparently unimportant, but nevertheless of considerable

1519.

moment. Maximilian had not been crowned by the pope, and he was consequently unable to procure the dignity which he held to be settled on his family, the German and Italian states having only acknowledged him as King of the Romans; a title to which there was no precedent in history for choosing a successor.* The Germans, strictly attentive to forms, refused to comply with the desire which Maximilian evinced to secure the Imperial honours to Charles the Fifth, his grandson; and a source of contention was therefore opened to any other European monarchs who might aspire to the empire.

The influence which Maximilian had exerted in favour of Charles had so materially biassed the minds of the German electors, that Francis, who immediately engaged in the lists, came forward to support his claims, with a far inferior chance of success to the king of Spain. Henry was more indifferent with respect to the Imperial dignity than either of his distinguished contemporaries, although he had frequently been flattered with the hope of obtaining it, by the intrigues of Maximilian. Resolved, however, at least to have the glory of becoming a candidate for the empire, he sent an ambassador into Germany to assert his pretensions to the crown, but

* See *Robertson's Charles the Fifth*, vol. ii. p. 56.

received from the German princes and the pope's nuncio, the intelligence that his delay in applying for the honour had rendered success impossible. This disappointment was softened by the most gracious expressions towards the king, and by marked respect and courtesy to the English ambassador.

Henry, perceiving that any contest would be hopeless, contented himself with the gratification of deriving, both from Charles and from Francis, such a degree of adulation and of homage as manifested his importance in their eyes; and his vanity was soothed by the notion of being the arbitrer of Europe, an office for which his deficiency in political science and his capricious temper rendered him peculiarly incapable. His favour was, however, eagerly courted by both princes, and Wolsey was made the mediator of his good-will. Francis had been long sedulous in his endeavours to win the cardinal to his side, not only by pensions and presents, but by promising to favour the scheme which Wolsey entertained of becoming pope, offering him the votes of fourteen cardinals, who were in the interest of France, in case of the decease of the present pontiff.* The hopes of Francis were nevertheless defeated, and the wishes of Charles were accomplished without the aid of the powerful minister.

* *Robertson's Charles the Fifth*, vol. ii. p. 63.

The electors of Germany, influenced by the opinion of Frederic of Saxony, who magnanimously rejected the imperial crown, conferred it upon Charles, five months after the death of Maximilian.* Success, however, in this point, did not diminish the solicitude of the new emperor to gain the favour of England; the spirit of rivalry, commenced in their contest for the imperial dignity, had sown the seeds of discord between the monarchs of France and Spain; and in case of an actual war, the assistance of Henry would be a formidable addition to the strength of either of the hostile kingdoms.†

Charles had already gratified one of Wolsey's reigning passions, that of avarice, by settling upon him a pension of three thousand livres; he now, with renewed eagerness, assured him of his aid in securing to him the papal chair, when a vacancy should occur. Wolsey was too well aware of the superior power which the sagacity and prudence of Charles, as well as the extent of his dominions, would give him in the affairs of Europe, to reject his proffered regard, which was offered to him with the most flattering condescension by the emperor, as "*his most dear friend.*"‡

It was at this time that the imposing title of

* *Robertson*, vol. ii. p. 66. † *Mezerai* p. 564.
‡ *Robertson*, vol. ii. p. 86.

"majesty" was first adopted by all the monarchs of Christendom, who had been contented
1519. hitherto with the appellation of "highness," or "grace:" * The new epithet was assumed by Charles immediately upon his accession to the imperial throne, and his example was instantly followed by contemporary sovereigns, in public documents and in proclamations; but a considerable time elapsed before this style was used with that invariable precision which has become habitual in this country. At the conclusion of the treaty with France, in October, 1518, an interview had been concerted between the French and English kings. Henry appeared to be desirous for the fulfilment of this clause in the treaty, and was, at this time, partial to the French nation and to Francis, whom he ever in his heart preferred to Charles, from the greater congeniality of disposition and pursuits which existed between him and the French king. He, therefore, evinced the utmost civility and respect to the four noblemen who were left as hostages by Francis, for the sums to be paid in lieu of Tournay. By tournaments and banquets, the detention of these foreigners was rendered an occasion of pastime and pleasure; and they were admitted to the familiarity and confidence of the king,

* *Robertson*, vol. ii. p. 70.

who constantly contrived some fresh amusement to vary the period of their absence from home.

Meanwhile, the English ambassadors, their attendants, and those English nobles who, having held official appointments at Tournay, had not immediately returned to England, but had been amusing themselves in the French court, were treated with similar courtesy and distinction by Francis; but received little improvement from their initiation into foreign manners and amusements; and, as is usually the case with travellers, they carried the follies and vices of their continental neighbours to a greater length than the French themselves. Report even insinuated that the extravagant frolics of the young Englishmen were countenanced by the thoughtless Francis; and that he was sufficiently indiscreet to ride with them disguised through Paris, throwing eggs, stones, and other trifles at the people; "which lighte demeanoure of a king *," remarks the chronicler, "was much discommended and jested at."

Moreover, when they returned to England, these young gallants were "all French;" discarded the dress, despised the viands, and dispraised even the ladies of their native island. Their arrogance, soon, however, received a rebuke; for the king's council, perceiving that the

* See *Hall*, p. 597.

young nobility of the court, encouraged by the jovial and affable manners of Henry, had approached to a degree of familiarity with him, which led them to forget their own situation and his dignity, "thoughte it not mete to be suffered for the king's honour;" and therefore represented to the king, how greatly such intimacies deteriorated from the public respect. It is surprizing to find that Henry, who, in the latter period of his life, inspired all who approached him with fear, now received with candour and even humility the remonstrances of his advisers. "He had chosen them of his council," he said, "both for the maintenance of his honour, and for the defence of all things that might blemish the same; wherefore, if they saw any about him misuse themselves, he committed it to their reformation." Thus authorized, these prudent advisers dismissed the younger part of the king's attendants, or, as they were then called, his minions; especially those who had been in the French court; and substituted in the place of these mortified youths, "foure sad and auncient knightes: Sir Richard Wingfield, Sir Richard Jerningham, Sir Richard Weston, and Sir William Kingston." This alteration occasioned much diversion to the ladies of the court; for, soon afterwards, the queen having prepared for the king, and for the French hostages, a

sumptuous banquet at her manor of Ha-
1520. vering in the Bower, in Essex, the king chose to return the compliment, having been delighted, as well as the ambassadors, with the liberal and agreeable mode in which the queen had received and entertained her guests. He, therefore, invited the queen and the French nobles to his manor of Newhall, otherwise called Beaulieu, a mansion built by himself, in Essex, where he made a splendid feast. In the course of the day, a masque was introduced, in which it was observed that the attire of the masquers was sober and old fashioned; that they wore long white beards, and that their "long blewe satten garmentes were adorned with cypress:" their demeanour corresponded with this sedate appearance, and "they daunsed with ladyes sadly, and communed not with ladyes after the fashion of masquers, but behaved themselves sadly. Wherefore the queen pulled off their visours, and then appeared the Duke of Suffolke, the Marques of Dorset, the Erle of Essex, the Lord Burgainy, Sir Richard Wyngfield, Sir Richard Weston, and Sir William Kingston; all these were somewhat aged; the youngest man was fifty, at least. The ladies had good sporte to see these aunciente persons masquers." When these grave and venerable masquers had left the hall, a more animated groupe entered,

consisting of the king, the four French hostages, the Earl of Devonshire, and six other young gentlemen. Their dress was suitable to their age, for instead of "long blew sattin garments adorned with cypress," they were attired in yellow and green fretted with silver of damask, "very richely to behold;" and then every masquer took a lady and danced; after this diversion had been continued for some time, their vizors were taken off, "and the king gave many brooches and proper gifts to the ladies."

Meanwhile the foreign noblemen endeavoured to avail themselves of their familiarity with Henry, to forward the interests of their monarch; and, as the best means of cementing the union, they urged the king to accomplish his projected passage to France, in order to meet Francis at Guisnes; representing how greatly he would be charmed with the manners and conversation of the French monarch.* So successful were these intreaties, that Wolsey, who was now entirely gained over to the interests of Spain, considered it useless to exert his influence in frustrating this design; and was, perhaps, the more readily disposed to accede to it, from a secret motive of vanity, which suggested to him how much his importance would be enhanced by an interview between two princes, both of

* See *Hall*, p. 599, 600.

whom he was supposed entirely to govern.* In order, however, to conciliate the fears and suspicions of the emperor, who had endeavoured by every possible means to prevent this event, Wolsey suggested to Charles a scheme which might greatly counteract the effects of Francis's assiduous attentions, and personal accomplishments, in securing the good opinion of Henry; and accordingly, when every arrangement had been made by the cardinal, to whom the entire regulation of the proposed interview was entrusted, when the nobles, many of them indignant at the expences of this useless expedition, were in readiness, and had been summoned to Canterbury, where the king awaited them, Charles unexpectedly landed at Hythe in Kent, attended by many noblemen and ladies, on his passage from Spain to Germany. Intelligence of this occurrence was instantly conveyed to Henry, who, flattered by this delicate compliment to his good faith and hospitality, dispatched Wolsey to assure the emperor of his welcome. Not satisfied with this mark of his respect, on the ensuing day Henry, with his usual promptitude, rode early in the morning to Dover Castle,

1520, May. where the emperor was lodged; the two princes met each other on the stairs, and embraced with great cordiality, and

* See *Lord Herbert.*

Henry then repaired to the apartments of the emperor, where they held a friendly conference. In vain, however, did Charles endeavour to dissuade Henry from the journey to France; the king replied that his promise had been given, but "bade Charles be confident as to his conduct when the interview had taken place." From Dover, the emperor proceeded with Henry to Canterbury, in order that he might attend the celebration of the feast of Pentecost, and meet there his aunt, Queen Katharine, who awaited his arrival with a train of ladies; and here the emperor also beheld the beautiful Dowager of France, Mary, Dutchess of Suffolk, to whom, had it not been for his own breach of faith, he would probably have been united. Discerning spectators remarked that he regarded her with sorrowful admiration, as if regretting that he had rejected so fair a consort; and his refusal to dance was ascribed to this sentiment, as well as to his national sobriety, which might with propriety, as Lord Herbert observes, have been laid aside on this occasion. He departed in a few days, and setting sail at Sand-
May 31. wich, repaired to Flanders, his native country, there to forget his disappointment among the cares and troubles of political turmoils. *

* *Lord Herbert*, p. 88.

On the day of the emperor's departure, the king, accompanied by Katharine, by his sister, Mary of France, and by the principal nobility of the kingdom*, sailed from Dover; and, reaching Calais in the morning, was received by many of the French nobility, whom he welcomed and entertained. On the fourth of June the king and the two queens removed to the residence which had been prepared for them near Guisnes; and where they remained, preparatory to the approaching festivities.

Both Henry and Francis seem to have been fully aware of the varying statements with which any great event is recorded, and desirous of transmitting to posterity a faithful portraiture of the glories of their interview, they each employed the most skilful artists and historians of the day, in order that the details of its splendour might be commemorated. The king of England was attended by Edward Hall, who was commanded "to see, and to write," and whose minuteness and general fidelity have left little to be desired in point of details; while on the side of Francis, ample and interesting memorials were drawn out by the Marquis de Fleuranges, and by the celebrated Du Bellai. In order still more effectually to perpetuate the fame of their

* Wolsey published a list of all those who were to attend upon the king. *Archæologia*, vol. iii. p. 194.

magnificence and of their chivalry, the two kings had recourse to the arts of sculpture and of painting: the procession to the Field of Gold was carved in bas relievo by the desire of Francis, but was ill executed, and imperfect in its likenesses; while Henry, who kept several foreign painters in his employ, caused an accurate delineation to be made of the whole scene, in a picture which is still preserved in the lower apartments of Windsor Castle, and of which an exact and ingenious account has been given to the public.* Notwithstanding this commendable solicitude to promote accuracy, the narrative and the delineation differ in some points of small importance, and especially in the character of that edifice which now received under its roof the King of England, his consort, and his sister. The painting represents it as a castellated palace of red brick † and free-stone, having on the gateway a lion carved in stone, trampling on a dragon, these animals being at that time the supporters of the royal arms. On an hexagonal turret is depicted a figure of Religion ‡, erroneously supposed to have been placed there

* *By Sir Joseph Ayloffe, in the Archæologia,* vol. ii. p. 194.

† Bricks were in use before this period, but the art of building with them was not well understood until after the introduction of an excellent cement, called the Flemish bond. *Arch.* vol. iv. p. 107.

‡ *Archæologia,* vol. iii. p. 203.

in allusion to the title of "Defender of the Faith," an appellation with which Henry was not endowed until some years afterwards.*

On the other hand, this building is described by Hall to have been constructed of wood, and, having been framed at Greenwich in several parts, to have been conveyed in a disjointed state to Guisnes, where it was united, and contrived so as to move upon vices. Sir Edward Belknap was entrusted with the management of this machine, with the assistance of three thousand artificers; but all important directions proceeded from the active and discerning Wolsey, whose taste was as elegant as his designs were magnificent. Of what materials soever it may have been composed, this temporary palace was thought to display so much ingenuity, that a model of it was preserved by that royal vertuoso, Charles I., among the pictures and other curiosities at Greenwich, belonging to that accomplished monarch. †

The ornaments allotted to this fabric were selected with that profusion of mythological images which then pervaded all works of the period in which imagination was allowed to have free scope. Before the entrance to the palace was a gilded fountain, whereon stood the old

* In 1521, and probably the picture was not completed until that time.

† *Herbert.*

god Bacchus, "birling" wine in copious streams, his head being surmounted with the motto, "Faiete bonne cherè qui vouldra." On each side of the gateway was placed a cupid with bows and arrows, intimating the dangerous presence of youth and beauty; and on the summit of the portal were placed the heads of celebrated heroes, as Alexander, Hercules, and others. Having entered into a "fair court," the spectator might be astonished at the sumptuous exterior of the building, the ample bow windows of which had gilded frames, inlet with sparkling stones; but the commodious apartments of the palace, its hangings and carpets of silk, of cloth of gold and of tissue, would quickly dispel the recollection of the external splendour. The decorations of the chapel attached to this residence were also superb, and the copes and vestments of the priests were the most sumptuous that could be procured in the city of Florence. But all this magnificence, without security from personal danger, would have afforded little comfort even to the valiant and unsuspecting Henry: by the precautions of Wolsey, a secret passage from this gorgeous but frail tenement was, therefore, constructed, leading into the castle of Guisnes, to which the king might, in case of treachery, retire without pursuit. Henry, however, at this time reigned

in the hearts of his subjects; and in the assemblage of his nobles and officers, ranged in rich tents, to the number of eight hundred and twenty, around his abode, he possessed a means of more certain defence than in any contrivance which the ungenerous suspicions of his minister might induce him to devise.

The neutral ground between the territories of Francis, which extended to the town of Ardres, and the province of England, which terminated at Guisnes, had been designated as the spot which was afterwards to acquire the name of the "Field of the Cloth of Gold." When Henry had arrived at Guisnes, he found that the King of France had already taken up his abode near Ardres, in a temporary residence erected in the precincts of an old castle; but as this habitation was mean in comparison with the costliness of the English palace, Francis caused a pleasure house to be erected on a simple and picturesque plan, the roof being supported merely by wooden columns, and painted to represent the heavens, twinkling with stars of gold foil. This fairy retreat was requisite as a shelter from the heat, a tent of cloth of gold, which Francis had caused to be pitched for that purpose, having been destroyed by the wind.* The regulations of this celebrated interview,

* *Hall*, p. 60.

which, like a drama, was to consist of various acts, evinced the determination of Wolsey not to manifest that confidence in the honour of Francis which the high and honourable character of the French king, at this period of his life, fully deserved. It was arranged that Francis, being in his own dominions, should pay to Henry the respect due to a guest, by first visiting the English monarch; but Wolsey protracted the performance of this ceremony by some useless and frivolous negociations with Francis, concerning the marriage of the dauphin with the Princess Mary, together with other matters which could not at that time be decided.* This was merely a diplomatic manœuvre, intended to deceive Francis with respect to the secret understanding into which Henry had entered with the emperor.

After these forms had been discussed, arrangements were made for an immediate interview between the two kings; and on the seventh of June these accomplished monarchs met for the first time, a tent of cloth of gold having previously been prepared for their reception, in the vale of Ardres. The procession of the English monarch and his nobles was so magnificent, that even the prolix chronicler Hall finds it scarcely possible to employ words sufficiently

* *Memoires Du Bellai*, p. 15.

expressive of his admiration: he declares it, however, to "have been the most goodly battail or bend of foot men, that ever, as he trowes, before was seen." The King of England rode on a Spanish jennet, trapped "in a marvellous vesture of a new devised fashion," made of fine gold of bullion, curiously wrought. On his head he wore a black velvet hat, with a drooping white feather on the upper side of the brim: on the underside was placed a rich circlet formed of rubies and emeralds intermixed with pearls. His dress (combining the descriptions of the annalist and the painter) was a garment thickly pleited of cloth of silver, ribbed with cloth of gold, over a jacket of rose-coloured velvet; his boots were yellow, and he held a small whip in his hand. Around the neck of his majesty was a collar of prodigious value, formed of rubies and of branches of pearl alternately; this splendid ornament was afterwards sold in the reign of Charles the First, beyond seas, the Duke of Buckingham and Lord Holland being agents for that king in that transaction*: on his breast Henry displayed a rich jewel of Saint George. He was preceded by the Marquis of Dorset, holding the sword of state, and on each side the king was attended by two pages. On the left hand of his sovereign appeared Wolsey, clothed in

* *Archæologia*, vol. iii. p. 213.

a gown of violet-coloured velvet, and riding on a stately mule, the trappings, the harness, the head-stall, reins, and breast-piece of which were of black velvet embroidered with gold. The Duke of Suffolk followed next, on a white courser. The manly beauty and dignity of this nobleman must have rendered him an admirable companion of the king, in occasions which require the display of personal accomplishments; yet although the figure of Brandon was robust and athletic, it equalled not the majestic mien of Henry, who, as we are expressly told by Hall, was "taller than any of his soldiers." The demure and lank visage of Fisher, Bishop of Rochester, who succeeded the handsome Brandon, with a forked beard reaching down to the pit of his stomach, giving a tacit reproof to the coxcombry of the duke, who usually wore that appendage in thick curls, and carefully parted in the middle *; the large white linen sleeves of the bishop, and his plain scarlet doublet, afforded an amusing contrast to the gay attire of Wolsey, and to the warlike and animated deportment of Brandon.† The king's "spare horse," always exhibited in ceremonious processions, was conducted by Sir Henry Guildford, master of the horse, a courtier distinguished no less by the valiant prowess

* *Grainger's Biog. Hist.* vol. i. p. 103.

† *Arch*, vol. iii. p. 213.

which he had manifested in early life, when fighting against the Moors under the banners of Spain, than by the learning and estimable qualities which recommended him to the friendship of Erasmus, with whom he maintained a correspondence. After this knight came the nine hench-men, a gay band of young gentlemen, riding on Neapolitan coursers, which were harnessed in such "marvellous fashion," and with "works so subtile," that the embarrassed chronicler was again at a loss how to describe these ingenious contrivances*; and he conceived it to be equally impossible to do justice to the rich apparel, the treasure of gold which was worn in chains and baudricks, "so great, so weighty, and so manifold," which this day decorated the persons of the lords and gentlemen of England.

Prepared, in this array, to proceed to the spot marked out for the interview, either the distrust which had been infused into the mind of Henry by his minister, or a national suspicion of French integrity, broke out on this occasion. The signal for approach was the discharge of two guns, one from the fortress of Ardres, the other from Guisnes, when both princes should be in readiness to march; but, scarcely had the notice been given, when the progress of Henry was checked by the return of George Earl of Abergavenny

* *Hall*, p. 609.

from the French camp, to which he had been sent to reconnoitre, and who now brought the intelligence, that the numbers of the French far exceeded those of the English soldiery. If Henry, on receiving this account, felt an inclination to recede from the proposed meeting, it was quickly repelled by the counsels of George Talbot, Earl of Shrewsbury, steward of the household, a peer whose long services in the preceding reign, and whose high character as a private individual, gave him a degree of influence with Henry, which the experienced servants of his father in most cases possessed. The advice of the lord steward was that the king should advance. "The Frenchmen," said the earl, "are more afraid of the English, than the English are of them: I advise your grace to proceed." "So we intend, my lord," replied Henry. The officers of arms gave the signal, the minstrels played cheerily; and, in a short time, the two monarchs met, embraced, and walked together arm in arm towards the tent which had been prepared for them.* The curiosity with which each prince must have viewed the other will readily be conceived. In respect to person, although Henry may have been considered by some to have had the advantage, his ally was by no

* *Hall*, p. 610.

means greatly his inferior. The King of France, according to Hall, was "verely a goodly prince, stately of countenance, merry of chere, broune coloured, high nosed, bigg lipped, faire brested and shoulders, small legges, and long fete." Francis was splendidly attired in a garment of cloth of silver, with a superb cloak of satin, set with pearls and precious stones, and fastened upon one shoulder; and his head was surmounted with a coif of damask gold, spangled with diamonds.

The French nobility, notwithstanding the contemptuous remark of Hall, "that they could not, for their garments of various colours, be known from the braggery," were considered on this memorable occasion to exceed the English in magnificence; while the latter displayed superiority in taste.* Unfortunately, the remark made by Du Bellai upon his countrymen applied to the nobles of both countries, who, in vying with each other in splendour, incurred expences and debts, of which they long felt the inconvenience; carrying, as Du Bellai remarks, in this vain shew of wealth, "their mills, their forests, and their meadows upon their backs." †

The first interview between the two kings was not diversified by any other amusement than a banquet, which afforded a convenient opportunity

* *Arch.* vol. iii. p. 199. † *Memoires du Bellai*, p. 16.

for conversation. This communication was rendered doubly interesting to both princes by the similarity of pursuits by which they were characterized; a resemblance which, in some respects, extended to their moral qualities. Both were affable, gay, and valiant; and were distinguished more for chivalric ardour than either for sound policy or perseverance in the endeavour to attain political ascendancy. The love of letters and of the arts was common to both; and the encouragement which the two kings extended to men of learning had alike procured them the homage of those who had the power of bestowing fame in return for honours. But here the analogy ceases; for the king of France, humane, benevolent, and incapable of revenge, possessed attributes which secured him affection from his people unmingled with fear.

After much mirth and discourse, the two monarchs separated, Henry having protested to Francis that "he had never before seen a prince for whom he could feel a greater degree of esteem;" and similar compliments having passed on the side of Francis. Yet in the arrangements of the English troops a degree of distrust was still manifested, which was the more conspicuous from the contrasted conduct of the French soldiers; for, while the followers of Henry were forbidden upon any pretext to quit their posts, and to mix

with their continental neighbours, the French ran gaily among the British troops, whom they greeted with their national frankness. On the same cautious and even ungenerous principle were the tournaments arranged, for which a place was marked out within the English pale.* On this spot were set two artificial trees, the one a raspberry bush, denoting the power of France, the other a hawthorn, frequently used as a symbol by Henry, because the crown which his father had won from Richard the Third was deposited during the battle of Bosworth field in a hedge of hawthorn.† These trees were intertwined; and, besides affording a bower for the heralds, were used as a place of deposit for the arms of all those combatants who were desirous to enter the lists. At the entrance of the field were two lodges for the refreshment and repose of the monarchs; and, on the right side of the enclosure, seats were erected for the Queens of France and of England, and for the ladies in their trains.

It was quickly understood, that the banners of the Kings of England and of France were suspended in the vale of Ardres, to challenge to feats of arms all those who prized glory and the approbation of the fair. The chief nobility of England had followed their sovereign to this

* *Hall*, 610. † *Archæologia.*

gallant encounter; and not only did all the gay and valiant peers of France quickly crowd to the field, but the peasantry from Picardy and West Flanders, "vagabonds, plowmen, labourers, and of the bragerie, waggoners, and beggars, that for drunkenness laie in routs and heaps." Knights, and even ladies, who came to see the spectacle, were compelled to lie on hay or straw, and were rejoiced to gain admission even when attended with so much personal inconvenience.* Yet not a single combatant appeared, to answer the challenge, from the court of the Princess Margaret, Governess of the Netherlands; nor from any of the dominions of the young Emperor of Germany.†

The tournaments, jousts, and combats at the barriers, that now ensued, together with the pageants, masques, and banquets, which gave an air of festivity and of peace to diversions otherwise of a martial character, have all been repeatedly and minutely described. A few anecdotes characteristic of the two monarchs, and of the times when these animated diversions formed a large portion of the business of life, may be gleaned from details which are wearisome except to a herald or a chronicler, from the similarity of the incidents which they relate.

On the first day of the tourney, the King of

* *Holinshed*, p. 655. † *Herbert.*

France, who, even in those days of gallantry, was remarkable for his devotion to the more amiable part of humanity, appeared on a courser, the bands of which were embroidered with the feathers of the raven, clasped with golden buckles; a device which by an ingenious interpretation might be converted into the following motto: "The heart confined in endless pain:" while he and all his companions in the lists wore a lady's sleeve* on the head, to denote, according to an ancient custom, that their regard for the fair spectatresses of the combat was the stimulus of their martial exertions.

The devices assumed by Henry were of a different character, and were all employed to designate his imaginary dignity as the arbiter of Europe, and to evince his sense of the importance which the monarchs of Christendom must necessarily attach to his alliance. In this sense, he displayed on the trappings of his horse, embroidered in lozenges, branches of eglantine, a plant which is fragrant and innoxious if handled gently, but prickly and offensive when seized with violence. In the same spirit was the motto conceived, which Henry caused to be inscribed upon the figure of an archer, placed over the door of his tent: "He that joins with

* A lady's scarf or glove was often introduced, and was not the least beautiful ornament. *Mills's Chivalry*, vol. i. p. 89.

me is master." Francis knew too well the temper of his ally not to humour him in this proclamation of his power, which, if not arrogant and ostentatious, was at least in bad taste; but with equal delicacy and address did the French king continue to proffer homage to the fair sex, without engaging in a dangerous competition with so impetuous an antagonist as Henry. Accordingly, on the second day of the tournament, he entered the field in a dress on which were wrought numerous little books of white satin, on which were inscribed the words "*a me:*" while around his garments a chain was skilfully depicted; an emblem of captivity, which being united in sense to the books and inscription, formed the following motto: "Libera me;" or, "Deliver me from bonds."

Henry could scarcely comprehend the refined flattery which Francis offered, in thus avoiding even the shadow of a comparison between the respective powers of the two kingdoms, and again appeared in a costume embroidered with pictured mountains, covered with basile; and, on the borders of which was this motto: "*Breke not these sweet herbs of the mount, donte for damage;*" thus intimating, that the slightest affront offered to the dignity of the English sovereign would not be suffered with impunity.

The combats lasted fourteen days, and consisted of a complete course of the tourney, the joust, and the barriers; and in all these exercises, though warriors of fame were engaged in the lists, the two kings were pre-eminent. Their prowess was so nearly equal, that even our chroniclers have not ventured to assert the superiority of Henry on this occasion, although it appears that in muscular strength he possessed a decided advantage over Francis. Previous to their first interview in the vale of Ardres, on comparing the weapons which each monarch habitually wielded, it was perceived that Francis was incapable of brandishing a sword with which he had been presented by Henry, who could use it without fatigue. In return for this gift from the English monarch, Francis dispatched to Henry a pair of cuirasses which were ingeniously constructed so as to relieve the shoulders from the pressure commonly experienced from the weight of the armour.* Yet it must not be omitted in justice to Henry, that he disarmed the Marquis de Fleuranges, one of the most valiant men among the French party, and likewise broke his spear, an action which was much commended after the combat was ended. In the exercise of wrestling, Francis was, however, more expert than his impetuous adver-

* *Herbert.*

sary; the height and ponderous character of Henry's person being, in this pastime, of less avail than the dexterity and coolness of his antagonist. Of this assertion Monsieur de Fleuranges, himself a valiant combatant on this occasion, gives a proof, in the following anecdote which he relates, and which affords a pleasing instance of persons in an exalted rank, divested of those forms which constrain the spirits, and destroy the expression of character. After the tournament was concluded, the French and English wrestlers displayed feats of strength and skill before the two kings. Both parties were proficient, but the English prevailed, and gained the prize. When the match was terminated, Francis retired with Henry into a tent, where they pledged each other in a cup of wine. Henry, seizing Francis by the throat, exclaimed, "My brother, I must wrestle with you;" and endeavoured several times to overthrow his rival, by tripping up his heels: but Francis, who was a great wrestler, was not readily to be overcome; he even prevailed so far as to twist his sturdy opponent round, and to throw him upon the ground with violence. Henry, greatly mortified, wished to renew the combat, but was prevented by those around him.

While these martial exercises were performed, repeated visits were exchanged between the

French and English kings and their queens, and the jealous fears of Henry were gradually dissipated by the frank, cordial, and ingenuous manners of the French king. The liberal disdain of ceremony which Francis evinced must have delighted one who was so little disposed to formal observances as the British king. Riding one day with a very small train to the palace at Guisnes, the French monarch delivered himself to the yeoman of the guard, "as his prisoner." Henry could not be insensible to this delicate compliment: "No," said he, with enthusiasm; "it is I who am, from this moment, *prisoner* to your courtesy. Receive this token of submission from your captive," throwing round his neck a collar of pearls valued at 5000*l.* sterling. A bracelet of double value was the return to this munificence.*

The tournament was solemnized by high mass, performed by Wolsey in the pontifical style; dispensing afterwards indulgences to the two kings: and so great was the appearance of amity between Henry and Francis, that it was even commonly affirmed that they had sworn together on the sacrament: a report by no means probable; for Wolsey, who possessed almost entire influence over Henry, would never have

* See *Memoires de Fleuranges.*

consented to the formation of so close a compact.

It was now time that those diversions should be commenced, in which the fair spectatresses of the tournament could participate, and in which they could display the ingenuity of their devices, and the costliness of their attire. Hitherto they had daily attended the field of combat, to which they had imparted that animated and happy appearance which is rarely to be observed in an unmixed assemblage of one or other of the sexes. The Queens of England and of France were never absent from the scene, which by continued repetition must naturally have become wearisome; and both must have frequently experienced considerable anxiety from the chance of accidents which, in the conflicts of the joust or tourney, but more especially in the combats with battle-axes, frequently disabled the eager competitors for contention from again appearing upon the course.

Francis was at this time married to Claude, the daughter of his predecessor Louis the Twelfth, and of Anne of Brittany. He had been betrothed to this queen some time before the death of Louis; but their marriage was delayed during her life, by Anne of Brittany, who had conceived a violent aversion to Louise,

the mother of Francis.* Claude, of whose qualities nothing remarkable has been transmitted, was destined to perceive that the affections of Francis were frequently estranged from her, that gay monarch being constantly under the controul of some rival of the mortified queen. Claude had, however, the satisfaction of observing on this memorable occasion, that the splendour of her court not only exceeded that of the Queen of England, but that the fair inhabitants of the British isles were constrained to borrow their fashions from their French neighbours, in order to compete in any degree with ladies of the French court, even at that period remarkable for their superior elegance.† In justice to our countrywomen, it must, however, be observed, that while the natural grace of the French cannot be denied, the splendour of their attire resulted from the superior facility which they possessed of obtaining the commodities of silks and velvets, the chief materials of which the habiliments of women of rank were then composed. The English, on the other hand, were obliged to import from Italy or from France all such articles; but the French already possessed the art of breeding the silk-worm, the climate to foster it, and the ingenuity to spin and weave its productions. At this period,

* *Mezerai.*

† *Arch.* vol. iii. p. 199.

the provinces of Languedoc, Avignon, and Provence abounded with the white-mulberry tree and with the silk-worm, the eggs of which the French were still constrained to procure in Spain; nor was the article yet in profusion in all the varieties of its manufacture, Henry the Second of France, the son of Francis the First, being the first that ever had the glory of displaying a pair of silk stockings, even in this favoured country.*

The masques and banquets which were now arranged were intended as a conclusion to the scene, and as an opportunity of each monarch bidding farewell to their respective queens, and were intermingled, as usual, with as much absurdity and profusion as the invention or the extravagance of the contrivers of the revels could possibly display. Henry had four different companies of maskers, each consisting of ten persons, among whom the Duke and Duchess of Suffolk played, with the king, a conspicuous part, as usual. The characters were arranged with the most ridiculous inconsistency. First came Hercules, in a garment of silver damask, and with a garland of hawthorn and vines about his head, a club covered with damask silver in his hand, and the lion's skin, composed of cloth of gold, over his shoulders. This strange personage was

* *Mezerai, Hist. France*, p. 904.

followed by Hector, Alexander, and Julius Cæsar, in robes and hats after the Turkish fashion; and what was still more anomalous, these were again succeeded by David, Joshua, and Judas Maccabæus, in long gowns of russet tinsel satin; while Charlemagne, Prince Arthur, and Godfrey of Boulogne, in cloth of gold and purple, trod closely upon their steps. Two parties of ladies, attired in the Genoese and Milan fashion, added to the diversified character of the scene, which, like all pantomimic exhibitions, was the more admired, the more absurdity it displayed. Thus accoutred, this motley band set out in procession, two and two, for Ardres, in order to visit the French queen; the king and the beautiful Mary, Duchess of Suffolk, forming the principal objects in the splendid spectacle; and passed on the road, without any apparent recognition, the French king and a troop of maskers, who were going to Guisnes to visit the Queen of England. Both of the princes were entertained with a sumptuous repast, followed by dancing; and, returning, met in the neutral ground where the tournament had been held: here they bade each other farewell; but it was observed by the spectators, that although precious gifts were exchanged, and many fair compliments passed, their parting had in it somewhat of coldness and constraint.

It was also affirmed, that Francis observed to

the English king, that the two nations
1520. did not assimilate, nor agree in their
June 27. mutual visits; and the cause of this want of cordiality was supposed to be a report which the French had circulated, that Calais was to be delivered for a sum of money to the French; a supposition which the English, who were extremely tenacious of their Gallic possessions, were greatly inclined to resent.

It is a melancholy reflection, that among the gallant English nobles who distinguished themselves, in military prowess, at the field of Ardres, there should have been many valiant combatants, then high in the favour of their sovereign, who afterwards became the victims of his jealousy and injustice. It is, indeed, an indelible stain in the character of Henry, that no services, no recollection of long and intimate association in the pleasures or in the business of life, no ties of kindred, nor claims of early friendship, could soften his wrath into mercy, when once the desire to ruin or to destroy an individual had taken possession of his relentless heart. In his fury he sacrificed the bravest and the noblest of his subjects, because they had magnanimity enough to withhold a base submission to his arbitrary measures. More especially was Henry distrustful of those who possessed the slightest affinity to the crown; and these, with few ex-

ceptions, fell, at one time or another, under his displeasure for some imaginary offence. The brave Henry Courtenay, Earl of Devonshire, noted on every martial occasion, and fortunate enough, in the field of Ardres, to prove equal in combat with Francis, against whom he ran a course, was cousin-german to the king, his father having married Catherine, daughter of Edward the Fourth, and sister to the mother of Henry. This relationship, far from producing that good-will which cements the connections of those in a lower sphere, had originated, even in the preceding reign, a secret suspicion of the house of Devonshire, notwithstanding its zealous adherence to the Lancastrian party; nor could either bravery or loyalty preserve Henry Courtenay from the effects of his involuntary crime in claiming consanguinity to the crown. After a long series of honourable employments, after standing as god-father to the Princess Elizabeth, and even being named heir apparent before the birth of that princess, this gallant nobleman finally became a victim to the groundless suspicion of having conspired against the king, with his relative, Reginald Pole. For reasons equally unwarrantable, Sir Edward Neville, brother of the Earl of Abergavenny, soon after the return of Henry to England incurred the displeasure of his sovereign. Implicated, more

from surmise than proof, as an accomplice in the treasonable designs of Edward Stafford, Duke of Buckingham, this brave knight, who was a constant companion of the king in his court revels, and who was thought to bear a considerable resemblance to Henry, was banished from the presence of his sovereign; and, although afterwards restored to favour, yet, he was spared only to endure the sentence of decapitation in 1538, upon a similar charge to that made against the Earl of Devonshire.*

Sir Henry Norreys, or Norris, one of the squires of the body to Henry the Eighth, and also a favourite associate both in arms and in mirth, was another of those victims to the cruel rage of the tyrant, although he, now, at the field of Ardres appeared as if favoured both by nature and fortune. Born of an ancient family, which, although not noble, was nearly allied to nobility, Sir Henry was honoured with successive offices about the person of the king, who had been likewise attended in the same manner by his father, John Norris. In the eighteenth year of this reign, Sir Henry was appointed Usher of the Black Rod, instead of Sir William Kingston, and was deputed to bear the same before the king at St. George's Feast. He was afterwards appointed one of the gentlemen of the king's privy

* *Collins's Peerage.*

chamber: and in this situation those circumstances occurred which eventually caused his ruin, but which have raised his character for honour, from his resolute refusal to criminate the unfortunate Anne Bullen, in whose imputed criminality he was supposed to participate. Sir Henry Norris was one of the principal challengers on the side of Henry at the field of Ardres, and little, in the zenith of favour and popularity, did this accomplished knight foresee the dangers to which his intimate association with the king would afterwards expose him. Elizabeth, subsequently Queen of England, afterwards evinced her conviction of his innocence, by raising his son, by Mary, daughter of Lord Dacres, to the peerage; and from him are descended the Earls of Berkshire and of Abingdon.*

But the most distinguished, although perhaps the least innocent of those victims of the royal jealousy, who were distinguished in the vale of Ardres, was Edward Stafford, Duke of Buckingham, whose high rank, magnificent train, and proud demeanour, gave him almost equal distinction with his sovereign on this important occasion, and who, associated with the Cardinal Wolsey, acted as the representative of the king on several occasions. The misfortunes and disgrace of this peer were near at hand, and perhaps the very

* *Dugdale's Baronage*, p. 404.

splendour which blazed around him in the field of Ardres accelerated his downfall.

The other lords and knights, whose names have been specified as persons of importance at the field of Ardres, were either men insignificant in their personal qualities, or of tempers so compliant as to escape the effects of Henry's stormy passions. Thomas Grey, Marquis of Dorset, steward of the household, and grandfather of the Lady Jane Grey, was fortunate enough to escape those quicksands to which the voyage of a courtier's life is peculiarly exposed; and he seems to have resigned that competition for chivalric distinction which was manifested by several members of his family. It is in his official capacity chiefly that the name of this nobleman has been mentioned by historians; and he appears to have taken little share in political factions. In the picture at Windsor he holds, however, a conspicuous station, leading a brace of greyhounds with milk-white collars round their necks; one of those animals being used as a supporter in the arms borne by Henry early in his reign, and assumed by right of his mother *, although he afterwards displayed the lion and the dragon.

The constant prosperity of the Duke of Suffolk, who, though recently introduced among

* *Arch.* vol. iii. p. 203—213.

the "sad and auncient maskers," yet, was still young enough to prove a valiant aid to his royal brother-in-law, has been already accounted for; and a similar compliance with the capricious disposition of the king secured also the safety of Sir Francis Briant, a gentleman of the bed-chamber to Henry the Eighth, and one of his party in the tournament at Ardres.

This knight, though employed by Henry both in the cabinet and in the field, may be regarded as a courtier who promoted the pleasures of the king, but who added little to the reputation of the monarch, to whose moral character the example and conversation of Briant are stated to have proved injurious. A dabbler in poetry, Sir Francis published some sonnets which were printed with those of the Earl of Surrey; and he likewise translated a treatise from the Spanish, "in dispraise of the life of a courtier," a subject for which his own experience might probably have supplied him with original materials.*

It has been asserted by De Fleuranges, that the brilliancy of the scene at Ardres was enhanced by a display of fireworks, let off from the castle at Ardres, in the form of a large Salamander, the symbol assumed by Francis the First; and as fireworks were invented before this period, it is

* *Dodd's Church History*, p. 192.

not improbable that the account may be true; although Hall, whose minuteness is indisputable, is silent on the subject.

The solicitude which Henry felt to perpetuate in this country the recollection of an interview which cost such immense sums, induced him to add to the narrative of Hall, the curious and valuable picture frequently mentioned; but chance had nearly defeated this scheme a century after the death of the monarch. The painting was duly transferred as an inheritance to successive princes, until the time of the commonwealth, when it was proposed by the parliament to sell it to the King of France; but Philip Earl of Pembroke, being apprized of this resolution, and having resolved that so great a treasure of art and of history should not go out of the country, secretly cut out the head of Henry the Eighth from the canvass before the arrangements were completed; and the French agent, on finding the picture mutilated, refused to complete the bargain.

After the Restoration, the earl gave the head of Henry the Eighth, which he had carefully kept, to Charles the Second, who caused it to be replaced in the painting, so skilfully, that the blemish can only be discovered on viewing the picture in a side light.* Thus, by an ingenious

* *Arch.* vol. iii. p. 257.

device, this valuable specimen of early art was preserved; the painter is, however, still unknown, and all that can be ascertained on the point is, that it was not Holbein, as that artist did not visit this country until a later period.

There is no action on record relating to this period of Henry's life, which betrays so great a degree of caprice as his conduct after his separation from the French king at Ardres. Arrangements were immediately made for an interview with Charles; and as these measures were probably not wholly unsuspected by Francis, the coldness between the two monarchs at parting is by no means inexplicable.

Soon after the field of Ardres had been deserted by its distinguished visitants, Henry and his queen, leaving Guisnes on the 25th of June, repaired to Calais, where Henry, in consideration of the heavy expences which his nobles had incurred in the recent and useless spectacle, commanded Wolsey to summon them before him, and after thanking them for their attendance and costly appearance, to authorize them to send many of their retinue home, and to caution them, after their great expenditure, to live "warily," which term was disdainfully interpreted by these haughty peers to be "barely," and was therefore received with

proud contempt.* After remaining some days at Calais, the king rode to Gravelines, where he was received by the emperor, and by the Princess Margaret, Governess of the Netherlands. At Gravelines, not only the king and his immediate attendants, but every member of his train, were so sedulously courted and so handsomely entertained by the emperor, that he became an object of universal regard to the English court.

On the eleventh of July, the emperor and Princess Margaret visited the king at Calais. A banqueting house, eighty feet in circumference had been erected for their entertainment, built upon the masts of ships, and covered with canvass, on which was depicted the universe: it was also adorned with statues of wicker-work, representing men armed and attired in the fashion of various countries. Unfortunately, a boisterous wind, rising the night before the arrival of Charles, destroyed this fabric, and reduced the various component parts of the universe once more into chaos; but notwithstanding this disappointment, the revels and maskings were carried on with great spirit; and the king, who ever performed a principal part in these diversions, appeared little inclined to engage in serious business. However, the Triple

* *Hall*, p. 620.

League, formerly signed between the emperor, when King of Spain, in conjunction with France and England, was again proposed by Monsieur de la Roche, the French ambassador, to Charles, in order that he might affix his signet in his new capacity of emperor. This he rejected, and would have left the town on the 13th of July, had not Henry detained him with a sort of gentle violence, which gave rise to a report that the emperor was obliged to remain by force. On the following day he quitted Gravelines, accompanied some miles on his journey by Henry, who accepted from him a valuable Neapolitan courser, richly caparisoned. Francis was highly indignant at this interview; and his resentment was aggravated by a rumour, at that time without foundation, concerning a projected contract of marriage between the emperor and the infant Princess Mary.

Henry, having now finished all his concerns on the continent, set sail at Calais with a fair wind, and returned to his native shores.

CHAP. VIII.

1520. — *Amusements of the King during the remainder of this year. — His progresses. — Archery, hunting, and hawking, chief diversions. — The King avoids jousts and tournaments. — The nobility impoverished by the recent interview with Francis. — Their discontent. — The Duke of Buckingham. — His trial and death. — Conduct of Wolsey on this occasion. — Treaty with Spain. — Selfish designs of Wolsey.*

HENRY passed the remainder of this year without engaging in any further display
1520. of valour or magnificence, and exercises of a less warlike character than those recently detailed occupied his summer progress. This annual excursion was varied by different field sports, in which the king both delighted and excelled; sometimes proving his unrivalled skill in archery, sometimes following his hawk in the precincts of one of his favourite manors; at others joining the chase, which, as well as the above-mentioned diversions, was thought an essential occupation for the higher classes, and was, like them, considered as a necessary part of education.

The practice of all these diversions was, at this period, enforced with rigid precision, and at-

tended by a degree of importance and preparation which have been gradually discontinued. What is now the result of custom, or the object of amusement, was then, in part, the effect of legislative enactions, under severe penalties. This remark applies rather to the mode in which these pursuits were to be carried on, than to the actual exercise of sports, to which a natural thirst for amusement, more intense in proportion as the mind is less cultivated, will ever, in some degree, incline all classes of society.

Before the use of fire-arms was adopted, active and athletic sports were essential to support the military strength of the country, the protection of which rested more upon the combined skill and efforts of individuals, than upon the discipline and scientific arrangements of its troops. The success of the English armies was obtained almost uniformly by means of its archers; and to allow the use of the bow to decline would have been equivalent to an indifferent surrender of that pre-eminence which England had hitherto asserted. The introduction of muskets among the British troops, which took place about this period *, considerably diminished the importance of missile weapons; and, in speaking of archery as at its height in this country, we must refer only to the early

* In 1521. See *Herbert.*

part of this reign. When it ceased to be an object of consequence in war, it became merely an amusement, in fashion or discarded, according to the prevailing taste of the monarch.

Although the weapon employed by the regular archers was usually the long-bow, yet the arbalist or cross-bow was in some instances employed on military occasions, especially in battles at sea, and against fortified places.* The preference accorded by our English monarchs to the long-bow arose from the superiority of skill and strength which it required, and without which it could not be exercised with success. The cross-bow, which was shorter than the other, being used by means of a catch or trigger, on the same principle as that of the musquet, brought into play no further effort of dexterity than that which is requisite in taking a good aim; and, acting upon the military forces in the same manner as the invention of steam is supposed to operate upon mariners, tended to destroy that ardour for superiority, without which no proficiency can be attained.†

* *Strutt's Sports*, p. 47.

† "Testimony," says Bayle, "is like the shot of a long-bow, which owes its efficacy to the force of the shooter; argument is like the shot of a cross-bow, equally forcible whether discharged by a dwarf or a giant." *Strutt, note*, p. 47.

The trigger on the cross-bow probably gave rise to the lock of the musquet. *Ibid.*

For these reasons the use of the cross-bow had been repeatedly forbidden during the early part of this century; yet, notwithstanding the prohibition of this implement by Henry the Seventh, in 1508, it was found necessary, in six years afterwards, to make a new statute, imposing a fine upon all those who kept a cross-bow in the house; nor was this effectual: and a complaint was made by the bowyers and fletchers that their trade had decayed, owing to the practice of unlawful games in the open fields, to the great injury of the public morals, and to the decay of archery.* This representation produced two other acts, compelling every subject of the king to exercise himself in shooting with the long-bow, and to keep a bow and arrows in the house, and exempting only *infirm* persons, those whose age exceeded sixty, and ecclesiastics, the judges of the two benches, or of the assizes, and the barons of the exchequer, from complying with this enactment. Fathers and guardians were also required to teach their children the use of the long-bow, and masters were enjoined to keep bows for their apprentices, whom they were obliged to teach and exercise in archery on holidays, and at other convenient times. Nor was it until the twenty-ninth year

* Games, such as tennis, bowls, cloysh, logating, and others.

of this reign that cross-bows and hand-guns were permitted by the legislature.

In obliging his subjects to keep up their reputation for archery, Henry enjoined nothing which he did not enforce by his own example; he excelled particularly in this art, "and shotte as strong and as great length as any of his guard," as we are repeatedly assured by Hall. The dexterity of the king in this practice was possessed by several members of his family, and had been eminently displayed both by Henry the Seventh and by his eldest son, Prince Arthur, who sanctioned with his name and patronage a society called the "Ancient Order, Society, and Unitie laudable of Prince Arthure and his Knightly Armory of the Round Table."* These knights, who shot at Mile End, then an unenclosed space set apart for the purpose, were joined also by Henry when he arrived at a proper age for the use of the bow; and he proved so zealous a member, that "he never saw a good archer, indeed, but he chose him and ordained such an one for a Knight of the Round Table." Margaret Queen of Scotland also excelled greatly in this exercise; and it is expressly mentioned that she shot a buck with her own hand, at Alnwick Park, where a hunting party was made for her amusement, when travelling on her road to

* *Drake's Shakespeare.*

Scotland.* Upon her marriage with James the Fourth, her inclination for this exercise was estimated by her husband, who sent her a "grett tame harte for to have a course†;" and in this taste for field sports, the Queen of Scotland was not singular, as it was then customary for ladies to join in those active diversions, which, in the present day, they are almost too little disposed to enjoy.‡

There are few amusements so well adapted to display both dexterity of hand, and elegance of form, as the exercise of archery. Our ancestors entered the field of competition provided with bows of well-seasoned yew, with arrows of oak or of birch, fledged from the wing of a grey-goose, or for gay occasions from that of a peacock; their left arms defended from the pressure of the bow by a bracer or tight sleeve, and the right hand by a glove: thus furnished, they took their places under a shed or bower, covered with green boughs, where, screened from heat or rain, they took aim either at deer enclosed in paddocks, or at the butt, a level mark placed

* *Strutt's Sports*, p. 46.

† *Warton's Hist. Poet.* vol. ii. p. 172.

‡ The habits of Katherine of Arragon, were foreign, and it does not appear that she engaged in archery or the chase. Perhaps, of the Tudors, next to Henry, his daughter Elizabeth excelled most in this diversion, killing sometimes, as we are told, three or four bucks in one morning. *Strutt*, p. 46.

for practice or pastime at a distance, varying according to the will and regulations of the archers.* The constant attention to this sport, and the incessant competition for superiority, produced a degree of skill in the archers of the sixteenth century, which would reduce a modern forester of Arden, or a Toxopholite, to utter despair. † The fields around London were continually occupied with young and old archers; and even so grave a personage as the mayor of London thought it his duty to resort to the rural suburb of Finsbury, in order to practise in the use of the bow with the citizens.‡

To attain the title of captain of the archers was considered a great distinction §, and Henry soon added to it a whimsical title, the origin of which is truly characteristic of his humour.

At a numerous meeting of archers at Windsor, at which the king attended, an inhabitant of Shoreditch, named Barlow, surpassed all the other competitors and even Henry himself, in dexterity. Henry was much pleased with his

* The prickes and the roaver were also used, and each of these markes required arrows of a differing flight.

† By an act in 33d of Henry the Eighth, no person who had reached the age of twenty-four might shoot at any mark under two and twenty yards' distance. Note in *Strutt's Sports* from *Archæologia*, vol. vii. p. 58.

‡ *Stowe's Survey of London.*

§ Of all the counties in England, Cornwall was considered to be the most distinguished for its archers.

performances, and jocularly termed him "*the Duke of Shoreditch,*" which appellation was long retained by the captains of the archers.*

Towards the close of this reign another company was formed under the auspices of Anthony Knevet and Peter Mewtas, gentlemen of the privy-chamber, for the purpose of inculcating the science and practice of artillery, by which was meant the use of the cross-bow, the long-bow and the hand-gun. The members of this society, which was entitled the Fraternity of St. George, were permitted to shoot at the popinjay, or at marks and butts for the purpose of pastime. Notwithstanding the interference of the legislature, this exercise rapidly declined in popularity as its actual importance decreased; and Henry, its great patron, has been charged with contributing to render it unfashionable, by associating it with a name so unhallowed to refined ears as that of Shoreditch. However that may be, we have at present scarcely the vestiges of this ancient and once universal diversion.

The amusement of hunting, in which Henry usually passed a great part of the summer progress, was frequently pursued in the same mode

* At a shooting match held in the time of Queen Elizabeth, the Duke of Shoreditch summoned a train of nominal nobility, consisting of the Marquisses of Barlo, Clerkenwell, Islington, Hoxton, the Earl of Pancras, &c. *Strutt's Sports*, p. 62.

as at present, by pursuing the game through the country on a fine and swift steed; and to ride gracefully was one of the many accomplishments requisite in the deportment of a finished gentleman. The royal hunt was, however, sometimes carried on in a manner greatly inferior to the animated scene which the same amusement now presents, and a degree of formality and of premeditation accompanied this species of chase, which tended to destroy the character of the amusement. When the king chose to hunt the hart in the park or forests, the master of the game and the forester were commanded to inform the sheriff of the county, that he might furnish stabling for the horses, and carts to carry away the deer which were slain. A number of temporary buildings were erected for the royal party and attendants, and the deer were enclosed in a haye, or fence-work of netting fastened to stakes, which were driven into the ground. Greyhounds, at that time the favourite dog of the huntsman, were then properly placed, and persons were appointed to prevent the populace from crowding to the enclosure. The yeomen of the king's bow, and the grooms of his tutored greyhounds, were careful to prevent any noise being made, in order that the game might not be disturbed before the arrival of the king. When the royal

family and the nobility had entered the lodges, the master of the game sounded three long "mootes," or blasts with the horn, for the uncoupling of the hounds. The devoted animals were then driven from the enclosures, and either wounded, defenceless, by the arrows of their high-born assailants, or chased, by such of the party as desired further sport, with the greyhounds. The sport was thus without excitement, and was at once cowardly and cruel, no chance being afforded to the game. The deer which were killed by any members of the royal family were not to be claimed by any other of the huntsmen; but the remainder were divided by the master of the game according to rule. A similar mode of carrying on this sport prevailed among the principal nobility, and even among the clergy, notwithstanding the repeated prohibition against the practice of churchmen joining in this pursuit.

The ladies of this period possessed one considerable advantage over those of the nineteenth century. They were generally independent of the male part of the community in their amusements; sometimes, indeed, they condescended to join their husbands and brothers in the chase, but they had frequently parties of their own, in which, riding on their Spanish jennettes, with a leash of favourite harehounds, or greyhounds,

they wound the horn, and roused and pursued the game without assistance, although their rank required that a number of retainers should be in attendance. As, in those days, the mode in which ladies rode resembled that of the men, it was a symptom of fashionable affectation to adopt a part of the male attire, familiar to the females of Turkey and of the East, but indecorous, because contrary to custom, in this country. The ladies of Bury in Suffolk were afterwards noted for their bold defiance of sarcasm, and for their perseverance in the use of male habiliments.*

Such were the field sports in which Henry usually passed his summer progress, and which were sometimes succeeded by jousts and tournaments; but this year, either weary of those turbulent diversions, or not wishing to incur further expences, the king avoided those amusements until the solemnization of the Christmas festival.

The interview between the French and English kings at Ardres, although unim-
1521. portant in its general consequences, gave rise to discontent among the nobles of England, who were exasperated at the useless expences into which that splendid exhibition had plunged them; and their complaints

* *Strutt's Sports*, p. 12.

were founded on reason, since many ancient and noble families owed their ruin to this cause. In the present day we should discuss without hesitation or apprehension the imprudence of thus draining the country of so large a portion of its wealth as had been transported to the shores of France, and of expending considerable sums of money in a foreign land. In the reign of Henry such a remark was indiscreet in the highest degree, and if it reached the ears of king or minister, would not pass without being registered as a heavy offence, which must, at some future time, be compounded for, with money, goods, or perhaps with life.

Edward Stafford, Duke of Buckingham, a man whose princely fortune, whose haughty and aspiring temper, and high blood, placed him in a situation so conspicuous, that no caution or wisdom could have been too great to ward off the attacks of envy and suspicion, had been so unguarded in his expressions concerning the recent expences, as to have excited the wrath of the cardinal; yet was this nobleman fond of ostentatious display, and at the field of Ardres he had been distinguished above all his peers by his profuse and princely magnificence. It was thought, therefore, that his murmurs had a deeper source than the cause alleged, and that they sprang partly from an aristocratic contempt for the power of one

so low in origin as the prime minister, and in a still greater degree from those hopes of succeeding to the crown, which the duke was supposed to entertain.

The claims upon which the designs of Buckingham may have been founded were by no means contemptible. He was descended both from John of Ghent, and, by the female line, from Thomas of Woodstock, the sixth son of Edward the Third. So far the pretensions of Buckingham were equal to those of Henry the Eighth, and his father, in the time of Richard the Third, had been advised by Morton, Archbishop of Canterbury, to seize the crown as a matter of right, but had declined acting on that advice, and had endeavoured to secure it for the Earl of Richmond, afterwards Henry the Seventh. But although Henry, by the union of his family to the house of York, had secured a title to the crown far superior in validity to that of any pretender, yet Buckingham, encouraged by the recollection of those recent vicissitudes which had given so much scope to enterprise, and building upon the failure of issue to the king, was weak enough to cherish the hope of obtaining the English crown. To this scheme Buckingham was also incited by means of astrology, a science which was believed in those days, and even at a more enlightened period, by many a

a wiser and cooler mind than this unfortunate nobleman possessed.

The most noted professor of this delusive study was a man named Hopkins, a Carthusian friar, who, having predicted the death of James the Fourth, and the success of Henry at Therouenne, was afterwards implicitly credited by several of the most distinguished persons at the English court. Hopkins having thrown
1512. out hints before the birth of the Princess Mary, with regard to the probability of the king's dying without issue, and also touching the duration of the king's life, Buckingham was so vain and imprudent as to hold several conferences with him, and to reward him for these fallacies with money. These circumstances, and the discovery of concealed stores and arms in the house of Buckingham, would have been sufficient, at any period when the country had lately experienced all the troubles of a disputed sovereignty, to be construed into treason. There is, however, great reason to conclude, that Buckingham was not clear from the imputation cast upon him, and that he actually meditated dangerous and treasonable attempts.

The conduct of Wolsey towards this unhappy nobleman has been censured as malicious and unjust. An affront to the cardinal had formerly

been given by the duke, who, at mass, had held a bason of water to the king, into which Wolsey having had the effrontery to dip his hands, the duke, irritated by his presumption, had poured the contents of the bason on his feet. This, and similar indignities, are said to have induced the cardinal to plan the ruin of Buckingham; in order to effect which, he thought it expedient first to deprive him of his chief friends and supporters. Thomas Earl of Surrey, who had married the daughter of Buckingham, and whom the cardinal hated, for having on some occasion drawn his sword on him, was appointed Vicegerent of Ireland, in the room of Lord Kildare; and at the same time, the Earl of Northumberland, father-in-law to Buckingham, was committed to the Tower upon a pretext of little moment.

It has been remarked that the "Stafford family were doomed to misfortune from their servants." * Buckingham had rashly taken into his confidence one Charles Knevet, or Knevil, whom he made the depository of his secret wishes and projects: he was afterwards induced to discharge this man, upon a petition from some of his Kentish tenants, who represented in strong terms the injustice and extortion of Knevet. In revenge for this dismissal, Knevet informed

* *Fiddes*, p. 274—277.

the cardinal of all that he knew concerning Buckingham's wild schemes; and Wolsey, either instigated by his own private resentment, or by regard for the public good, scrupled not to receive the confidence thus foolishly reposed, and basely betrayed.

In consequence of this intimation, the duke was seized at his manor of Thornbury, in Gloucestershire, where he was engaged in erecting a splendid castle, and in forming an extensive chace.* Sir William Compton †, Sir Richard Weston, and Sir William Kingston, being sent to apprehend him, he immediately obeyed the summons, and came to Windsor, where, finding himself guarded, his agitation became extreme. On the following day he proceeded to Westminster, and getting into his barge, he landed at the cardinal's bridge, where he requested to see Wolsey; but being told that he was indisposed, "Well," said he, endeavouring still to keep up an appearance of unconcern, "yet will I drink my lord's wine ere I pass." Then a gentleman of the cardinal's house brought the duke into the cellar, where he drank; but when he perceived that no salutation was given to him, he changed colour, and inquired hastily for his chancellor, wondering that he had not

* *Stowe's Annals*, p. 514.

† Sir W. Compton, ancestor of the Earls of Northampton.

answered a summons which he had sent him, not knowing that the man had been already committed to prison. The unfortunate Buckingham then proceeded towards London, and was soon afterwards met by Sir Henry Marney, with a detachment of the king's guard, and lodged, as a prisoner of state, in the Tower. Nor was he single in his imprisonment: Lord Abergavenny, who had married the Lady Mary Stafford, his daughter*, was also committed, charged with having concealed the following declaration of his father-in-law: "That if the king died, he would have the rule of the realm, in spite of whosoever said the contrary;" swearing, that if the Lord Abergavenny revealed this, he would fight with him. But Lord Abergavenny afterwards acknowledging misprision of treason, was discharged, and again received into the favour of the king, who regarded him with partiality. The brother of this lord, Sir Edward Nevill, was forbidden the royal presence upon some vague suspicion, but was soon restored to the favour of Henry, whose resentment, as well as his attachments, was sometimes transitory. Lord Montague, cousin to the king, was also committed to the Tower upon similar suspicions. Buckingham alone was the victim of the royal jealousy, or justice.

* See *Collins's Peerage.*

The trial of the duke was held in Westminster Hall; the Duke of Norfolk was chief judge, the Duke of Suffolk, the Marquis of Dorset, the Earls of Worcester, Devonshire, Essex, Shrewsbury, Kent, Oxford, and Derby, the Lords Saint John, Delaware, Fitzwarren, Willoughby, Broke, Cobham, Herbert, and Morley, were among the rest of the judges. The duke, with the axe of the Tower carried before him, was brought to the bar, and the indictment was read to him. This he vehemently pronounced to be "untrue, and forged to bring him to death." The witnesses were then called, and it was melancholy to see that they consisted chiefly of members of his household, who had eaten of his bread, slept under his roof; and professed duty and allegiance to him. First came one Sir Gylbert Perke, a priest, and his chancellor; then his confessor, a priest named De la Court, who produced the handwriting of Buckingham against him; and lastly, Charles Knevet, his cousin, and formerly his steward, whose evidence was more important than that of all the other witnesses. This treacherous servant, who had first proposed the treason to Buckingham, by flattering him with the hope of being one day king, deposed, among his other allegations, that the duke, on being reproved by the king for retaining in his household one Sir William Bulmer, a servant belonging to

Henry, whom he had corrupted by a bribe, had declared that if the king should send him to the Tower, he would request an interview, and run his body through with a dagger, as his father intended to have done to Richard the Third, if he had been admitted into his presence at Salisbury.* The depositions having been read, the duke was allowed to retire to a house called *Paradise*, to consider his defence.† During his absence, the peers, with the exception of Norfolk, upon consultation, declared him guilty of treason. Buckingham, on his return to the bar in a state of great agitation, received from the Duke of Norfolk the sentence of death, by hanging, accompanied with the barbarous custom of burning the limbs and bowels. Norfolk, although stern in nature, yet could not forbear shedding tears in pronouncing this severe decree upon the proudest nobleman in England, and his intimate friend. The unhappy Buckingham replied, "My Lord of Norfolk, you have said unto me as a traitor, but I was never none; but my lords, I nothing maligne for that you have done to me; the eternal God forgive you my death as I do; I shall never sue to the king for life; however, he is a gracious prince, and more grace may come from him than I desire. I desire you my lords, and all my fellows, to

* See *Stowe*, p. 112. † *Hall*, p. 624.

pray for me." After this address, the edge of the axe was turned to him, and the officers conducted the duke into his barge. Sir Thomas Lovell desiring him to sit on the cushions and carpet which were placed for him: "Nay," said he; "for when I went to Westminster I was Duke of Buckingham, now am I but Edward Bohun, the most wretched caitiff of the world." After landing at the Temple, the duke was conducted through the city, and as he passed along, he desired the people to pray for him. Many were the lamentations which his fate excited; and it was generally thought, that if he had interceded, the royal favour might have been accorded*; but the duke had proudly refused to ask for mercy, and had expressed no other regret for his fate than the ignominious mode of his death. His sentence was, however, commuted into decapitation, which he suffered on the seventeenth of May with decency and fortitude. Some proofs of a relenting spirit were shown in the conduct of Henry to the ruined family of this proud nobleman. The Dutchess of Buckingham was provided for, a part of the forfeited estates were allotted to the duke's eldest son, and Stafford Castle was also subsequently restored to the family.† Hall makes this suitable

* See *Lord Herbert*, p. 101.

† *Cobbett's State Trials.* vol. i. p. 296.

reflection on his death:—"Alas! that ever the grace of truth was withdrawn frō so noble a man, that he was not to his king in alegeaunce as he ought to have beene; suche is thende of ambicion, thende of false prophecies, thende of evil life and evil counsel!"

With the Duke of Buckingham ceased the office of High Constable of England, which he inherited from the Bohuns, Earls of Hereford, and which has never been revived, except for some great occasion, such as a coronation.*

It is difficult to form an opinion with respect to the extent of the designs upon the crown, which Buckingham may have cherished; he appears to have been a vain and credulous, rather than a designing or a dangerous character: and some historians have attempted to defend him from the charge of treason, by the assertion that he aspired to the succession, only in case of the king's death. But if the evidence of Knevet be admitted, the duke had anxiously contemplated the probability of that event, which, as a faithful subject, he was bound in duty to dread, and if possible to avert; and when it is considered that Buckingham not only possessed some title to the crown, but had the means of seconding his claims by wealth, which he took care not to dissipate; and when the great power attached

* See *Hume's Hist. Eng.*

to his office as High Constable is considered, it must be allowed that he was a man whom any government would have had reason to regard with jealous apprehension.

The conduct of Cardinal Wolsey, in prosecuting Buckingham, and in persuading the king not to extend his mercy to the unhappy peer, may be admitted to have been prudent and cautious; that it was just, or absolutely necessary, is doubtful. It may also be suspected, that however wise the action was, the motives whence it proceeded were mean and revengeful. The enmity between Wolsey and Buckingham was notorious, and it had given rise to contentions of a ridiculous nature. The duke having insulted Wolsey by throwing water upon his feet, as has been before related, the cardinal swore that "he would sit on Buckingham's skirts;" the duke, however, determined to frustrate the execution of this threat, went on the following day to court in a short coat without skirts, assigning to the king as a reason for this singularity, "that he was resolved to disappoint the malice of Wolsey."* The cardinal, who like all men of inordinate pride could never forgive an affront to his dignity, was by no means disposed to disregard this, and similar insults; and

* See *Grainger*, vol. i. p. 108. Note from *Dodd's Church Hist. of England.*

he determined, as it was said, to effect the ruin of his enemy. With this design, he sent away or imprisoned those who might have petitioned the king in favour of the duke; and in the arrangement of the trial he was guilty of blameable injustice, for although all the peers had a right to preside, only twenty-one were present. It is difficult to form an opinion from the expressions of popular feeling by which all the chronicles of the time were more or less biassed; and in reviewing every action of Wolsey, as minister, it must be remembered that these annals were written after the decline of his greatness, when he was in disgrace both with the court and the people. The public indignation was violently excited against him on this occasion, and, among other invectives, it was remarked "that it was by no means extraordinary, that a butcher's son should delight in shedding blood." The nobility were also offended with the cardinal for the ruin of one who was connected with most of the noble families in England.* The Duchess of Buckingham did not long survive her loss; her death took place in 1528. Knevet and Hopkins are said also to have been struck by remorse for their treacherous conduct, and to have died of grief soon after the execution of Buckingham.

* Charles the Fifth is said to have remarked that the butcher's dog (meaning Wolsey) had devoured the fairest buck (Buckingham) in England. *Weaver*, p. 419.

The king was so frequently heard to express, in the early part of his reign, a humane horror of taking away the life of any human being *, that this event was naturally regarded as the work of the cardinal: the general opinion was, however, carefully concealed from the knowledge of Henry, who, in some instances, gained no intelligence but such as suited the views of the minister.

While England was engaged in reflections upon this melancholy scene, the personal and political jealousy which existed between Charles Emperor of Germany, and the King of France, had broken out into open dissensions. Henry, deeming that he was bound, in his character of umpire, to compose the differences between these princes, if possible, had already offered Wolsey as a mediator; but this proposal was rejected by Francis, who well knew the motives of interest which attached the cardinal to his rival. A congress was, however, appointed at Calais, to which the three states sent deputies, and an agent was also dispatched from Rome to negotiate secretly with the emperor. Wolsey attended on the part of England, and taking with him the great seal, and a retinue of the chief lords of the court, was received and treated almost with the same consideration as if he had been indeed

* *Herbert.*

king of Great Britain. The congress made no advances to peace; and Wolsey, having intimated to Henry that there was but little chance of pacific measures, was commissioned by England to declare that Francis had first broken the Triple League by beginning hostilities; and shortly afterwards, an offensive alliance was concluded at Bruges, by the cardinal, on the part of England, with the pope and emperor, against France. This proceeding was an egregious error in politics; the power of Charles the Fifth was already too great, and might have destroyed the independence both of France and of England, and the league, so replete with folly and imprudence, was the consequence of Wolsey's selfish schemes, and of the blind confidence of Henry in the judgment and integrity of his minister. In the conference at Bruges, Wolsey obtained a promise from the emperor to promote his views upon the papacy, in case of the death of Leo: for this end were the interests of his country sacrificed.

CHAP. IX.

Controversy in which Henry the Eighth was engaged. — Reflections upon the Reformation. — Resistance of our Kings to Papal Usurpations. — Character of the Clergy. — Publications of the day considered. — Exceptions to be made in favour of churchmen. — Colet. — Quotation from Fox. — State of feeling in this country towards the Church in the early part of the Sixteenth Century. — Lollardism considered as the parent of Lutheranism. — The Schisms of the Church. — Characters of the later Popes. — Doctrine of Indulgences secretly despised by many enlightened Romanists. — Erasmus. — Melancthon. — Zuinglius. — Luther. — His early life. — Controversy with the Church of Rome. — Henry enters the lists. — Receives the title of Defender of the Faith. — His proceedings against Luther.

THE attention of the Christian world was directed during the course of this year
1521. towards a controversy in which Henry the Eighth bore a distinguished part. The revolution in religious affairs which was gaining ground on the continent at the same time; the causes which had gradually produced the important crisis; the nature and merits of the new opinions, have been too frequently and too ably discussed, to render it necessary to enter into a long disquisition upon this interest.

ing subject. Some reflections, however, upon the origin of this great change, and more particularly upon the immediate operations of the Reformation in this country, and some details which cannot be inserted into histories of a more comprehensive and aspiring character, may not be unacceptable at a period when minute inquiry is the passion of the day; nor can they with propriety be omitted, as possessing a close connexion with the pursuits, concerns, and conduct of the monarch under whose government the seeds of much that is valued and respected in the present age were roughly but efficaciously nurtured.

Although adventitious circumstances gave success to the new doctrines, yet, the germ of innovation must be sought in the very constitution of that establishment, in the bosom of which the devout catholic had, during many centuries, "slept the sleep of orthodoxy," and which was calculated to increase spiritual pride, to promote intolerance, and to disturb the peace and order of society. The constitution of the hierarchy was radically bad; the head of the church, a power foreign to many countries over which it presided, was guided by interests separate from those of a great portion of the community *; and the clergy, induced by every motive of policy, and

* *Hume.*

inclined from every principle of education to adhere to their chief; deigned scarcely, in the climax of their greatness, to acknowledge the reigning prince as their master.*

To enter upon the evils, and to describe the extent of papal authority in general, were scarcely expedient, when so ample a scope of inquiry and of reflection has already been embraced by numerous writers on the subject; it is sufficient to remark, that to England is due the honour of having resisted the encroachments of the papal church, at an earlier period, and with a greater degree of consistent firmness, than was displayed by any other country of Christendom. With the princes of the Norman line began the first struggles for emancipation from superstitious thraldom; it is true that those efforts were of small importance compared with subsequent acts of resistance, and that they proceeded rather from avarice than from a spirit of independence; but they were useful in preparing the way for succeeding exertions in favour of reli-

* Some acts in the reigns of our later kings rendered the clergy more submissive; but in the time of Edward the First, Wincelsey, Archbishop of Canterbury, was only, by threats of an attainder for treason, induced to accede to his sovereign the application of "Master;" "a term," says Fuller, "with which his tongue was before unacquainted, whom neither by word or letter he would ever acknowledge under that notion." *Fuller's Church Hist.* p. 91.

gious liberty. It was in the reign of William the Conqueror that the clergy became liable to impositions from the king, upon levying military forces, from the contributions for which they had before been free; and it was possibly this measure which suggested to his successor William Rufus, the notion of claiming the first fruits of every vacant bishopric or monastery, under the patronage of the king.* The celebrated constitutions of Clarendon, in the reign
1164. of Henry the Second, proved an important check to the increasing immunities and exemptions for which the clergy contended; and by rendering clerks liable to the decisions of secular judges, paved the way for an equal administration of justice.

In the reign of Edward the First the first statutory defence was made against papal exactions, by an act of "Provisors," as it was termed, which was confirmed by Edward the Third by another statute, the preamble to which has been considered as an open "manifesto against the church of Rome."† But Richard the Second, although one of the feeblest monarchs of the Plantagenet line, afforded the most signal proof of that independance which the monarchs of England were determined to assert, by the

* *Dugdale's Origines Judiciales*, p. 127.

† *Barrington's Observations on the Statutes*, p. 281.

important statute of Præmonere, or Præmunire, founded on the preceding acts; intended to prevent the encroachments of the court of Rome in giving away benefices, the presentation of which belonged to the king, lords, and commons; and subjecting all those persons to imprisonment and confiscation of goods, who should purchase translations to bishoprics, sentences of excommunication, bulls, or other instruments from the court of Rome, against the king and his crown.* This celebrated act, which has obtained its well-known appellation from the first word of the writ to the sheriff, authorizing proceedings upon the statute, was one of the most popular measures touching ecclesiastical affairs that had hitherto been enacted; the practice assumed by the pontifical power, of bestowing the reversion of ecclesiastical benefices in England, one of the most obnoxious usurpations of papal authority, being annihilated by this law. Even the clergy assented to the benefits of this measure; "no man," as Fuller observes, "liking to see himself buried alive by having his successor assigned to him."†

Henry the Fourth insisted also upon the statutes of provisors with a degree of freedom and warmth, in the terms of the acts passed in his reign, which one could hardly expect to find

* *Burnet*, vol. i. p. 198. † *Fuller's Church Hist.* p. 147.

authorized by the government of a country still attached to the Roman catholic persuasion; and the terms "de l'horrible malverse et damnable custume que est introduce de novel en la cour de Rome," have more resemblance to the language adopted in the latter days of Henry the Eighth, than to the more cautious and pliant counsels of our earlier kings. The salutary measures of which this brief detail has been given, were not, however, wholly successful in diminishing the well-established ascendancy of the clergy; nor was it possible that any immediate effects should result from those legislative provisions, while almost the entire jurisdiction in courts of law, the supreme influence in the counsels of the king, a large proportion of votes in the houses of parliament, and the majority of offices about the crown, were monopolized by spiritual persons. "It was now generally complained of as a nuisance," says Fuller, speaking of the state of church affairs in the middle of the fourteenth century, "that the clergy engrossed all places of judicature in the land; nothing was left to laymen but either military commands, as *general*, *admiral*, et cetera, or such judges' places as concerned only the very letter of the common law; and those hardly reserved to the students thereof; as for embassies into foreign parts, *noblemen* were employed therein, when expence, and not

experience, was required thereunto, and ceremony the substance of the service; otherwise, when any difficulty in civil law occurred, then clergymen were ever entertained. The lord chancellor was even a bishop; (as if against equity to employ any other therein:) yea, that synod generally appeared as a synod of divines, of which the *clerks* were *clerks*, as generally in orders; the same was also true of the lord treasurer and of the barons of the exchequer." *

Engrossed with foreign or domestic wars, and diverted from serious reflection in the time of peace by martial and active amusements, it was not till the progress of knowledge had inspired the laity with a new stimulus to ambition, that the value and extent of that power of which they had been bereaved was fully manifested to their view. Perpetual contests between the temporal and spiritual interests now arose, prevailing by turns, according to the inclination and policy of the reigning monarch. To prevent the interference of the clergy in courts of law, several enactions were made even by Henry the Seventh, that zealous adherent to the papal power; and his son, the warmth of whose zeal amounted to bigotry, in this respect adopted the same efficacious policy. Yet it was not until after the Reformation had made considerable

* *Fuller*, p. 113.

progress, that so great a means of influence as the possession of legislative jurisdiction was more than partially transferred to the laity.

It is possible, that no attacks upon papal authority would have been attended with so much success, if the professors and preachers of religion had not first become degraded in the eyes of the people; and fallacies of doctrine, incident, more or less, to all human opinions, would scarcely have been fatal, if the lives of churchmen had not been far more impure than their tenets. In expatiating upon the vices of the clergy, the state of civilized society in general, at the same period, must however be taken into account, and we must compare the characters of the ecclesiastical part of the community, not in the same scale with those of more enlightened times, but by that in which the merits of their contemporary laymen are to be estimated. During the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries the standard of moral conduct was by no means so exalted as at present. The mental energies of the poor were depressed by the tyranny which they endured from the aristocracy; and good order was subverted by that brutal ignorance which prevented the lower classes of men from comprehending the utility of established laws, to a compliance with which they could be driven only by severity and

force. The education of the higher ranks tending chiefly to inculcate a sense of their own importance, to enhance the value of military prowess, to engender an indifference to tranquil, useful, and studious occupations, and to produce repugnance to the trouble of thought, it was not surprising that the nobles displayed, in too many instances, violence of character, wanton extravagance, gross superstition, oppressive conduct to inferiors, and indulgence in voluptuous pleasures. We have already seen, that when Henry the Seventh caused an inquisition to be made by Empson and Dudley into the private conduct of his subjects, few were found who had not, in some degree, offended against the penal statutes. Highway robbery, theft, incontinence, murder, disgraced all classes of society; and perjury, frustrating all the exertions of justice, was so common at this period, that Wolsey deemed the most rigorous and active measures essential to repress its frequent recurrence in the courts of justice.

It must, however, be acknowledged, that even viewed with this allowance for the general depravity of the age, the licentiousness of the clergy far exceeded that of all other classes of society. To attempt to disprove this fact would be synonymous with a disbelief of many of the chronicles of that period, of the statements of the

visitors appointed to enquire into the monastic abuses, and would require us to reject, as the effusions of a malicious spirit, most of the poetical and lighter productions of the day. In admitting the narrations of the chroniclers in relation to the reign of Henry the Eighth, it is necessary however to remember, that many of these annals were written in the reigns of Edward the Sixth and of Elizabeth, when the reformed religion had the ascendancy, and when representations, inflamed by party zeal, were encouraged by the approbation of the presiding government. The depositions of the visitors can, however, scarcely fail to be generally correct, when their number, and the respectable character of some of the commissioners are considered; besides, in various instances they are found to have given the just meed of praise to such of the ecclesiastical institutions as were exempt from the general corruption. The writings of Chaucer refer to an earlier and darker period of history than that in which the Reformation commenced; but the satires of Shelton, which turn chiefly upon the vices and the luxury of the clergy, were not only tolerated by the orthodox Henry Seventh, but their author promoted to offices of trust and honour: a proof that his veracity was unimpeached.* The works

* *Warton, Hist. Eng. Poet.* vol. iii. p. 341.
Anthony Harmer (Henry Wharton), in his specimen of the

of Bale, himself a convert from popery, are written with the same intolerant and intemperate spirit which renders the graver productions of the martyrologist Fox disgusting to the candid reader, and of suspicious credit to those who seek historic truth; yet they possess too great a portion of substantial fact to be discarded in a survey of the early days of the reformation.

Another production, "The Supplication of the Beggars" against popery, presented to Henry the Eighth after his favour towards reformation had been openly declared, describes the clergy, "not as shepherds of their flocks, but as ravenous wolves, going in herds' clothing, devouring the sheep.* Possessed "of all the goodliest lordships, manors, lands, and territories," they are said "to look so narrowly upon their profits, that the poor wives must be accountable to them for every tenth egg, or else she getteth not her

errors in Burnet's "Hist. of Reformation," accuses the bishop of having admitted the statements regarding the iniquitous condition of the monasteries, from Stevens's Apology for Herodotus, a work taken, according to Wharton, from a "vile anonymous pamphlet." See *Harmer's Specimen of Errors*, duodecimo, p. 47.

The sources from which Strype has gleaned similar accounts, are, however, of undisputed authenticity; and although Fuller, with commendable candour, rejected the Apology for Herodotus, as unfair evidence, he has given sufficient proofs of monastic profligacy.

* See *Lord Somers's Tracts.*

rights at Easter, and must be taken as an heretic." Besides these small gains, the clergy are accused of extorting vast sums of money by "probates of testaments, pilgrimages and mortuaries; by dirges and masses, which, if not sung for the dead, they were accounted as heretics; by cursing men, and absolving them again for money; by summoning persons to the commissaries' court, and releasing them again for money; by hearing confessions, of which, nevertheless, they kept no counsel." They are further reprobated as the seducers of married women, the encouragers of open profligacy, and the oppressors of the innocent. But the invectives of enemies cannot be admitted as evidence; and as it has been at all times the practice among declamatory writers to exaggerate the vices of their own day, the Beggars' Petition must be viewed as an effusion of party feeling. If, however, only half of its statements be credited, it is sufficient to corroborate the historical accounts of the profligacy of those, whose ministry was intended to correct the errors of appetite and passion.

The state of celibacy imposed upon the clergy has been justly assigned as a sufficient cause of most of their deviations from moral conduct. Severed from those connections which humanize society, they lost an important and effectual

motive to decency and purity of life; and although it is true that this restraint was evaded by the secret marriage of the greater portion of the clergy, who, under the title of "concubines," paid a tax for their wives by which minute inquiry into their real condition was eluded *, yet this practice, licensed and adopted by the dignitaries of their church, who brought up their children under the name of nephews, admitted of a degree of prevarication which no reasoning can justify.† In England greater latitude in this respect was allowed than in any other country, until the time of Henry the Eighth, in whose eyes the marriage of the clergy was an act of impropriety not to be pardoned. During this year he published a manifesto, proclaiming, that "understanding a few priests as well as other religious men had taken wives, and as his highnesse is no ways minded that the clergy of his realm should, with the example of such a few numbre of light persones, proceed to marriage," he declares "that none that have attempted marriage, that be openly knowen, or all such as will presumptuously proceed to the same, that they, ne any of them, shall

1521. Nov. 16.

* Particularly among the western clergy. In this way Bonifface, Archbishop of Canterbury, and other prelates, "dyd live, though all the world did not barke at the matter." *Harmer's Specimens of Errors*, p. 79.

† The better informed clergy were chiefly averse to the laws against celibacy. See *Wilkins's Concilia*, vol. iii. p. 647.

minister any sacramente, nor any other ministerie mystical; nor have any office, dignity, cure, privilege, profit or commodity heretofore accustomed nor belonging to the clergy, but shall be utterly expelled from the same."*

To the evils resulting from laxity of morals, were added the extreme ignorance of the priests, and their inattention to the spiritual necessities of their flocks. The beneficed clergy rarely resided on their livings; even some of the bishops were foreigners who rarely visited the English shores; and the nominal instruction of the poor in religious tenets was left to low and ignorant curates, who were little, if at all, better informed than their parishioners. Hence arose every species of delusions and corruptions; the professors of religion, indifferent to the real import of the scriptures, boldly advancing impostures which were as greedily believed. It is true that the superior clergy looked with secret contempt upon those infamous delusions which were daily propagated and received; and, incredulous themselves, had the meanness and impolicy to countenance these frauds, as conducing to the revenues of the church.† But if they were better informed

* *Wilkins's Concilia*, vol. iii. p. 697.

† That the clergy, at a much earlier period than the reign of Henry, secretly scoffed at miracles, is evident from the following anecdote of Becket. At a dinner given by that archbishop at his palace, a Cistercian abbot engrossed nearly all

than the inferior orders of churchmen, they were not more honest, and were besides infatuated with the barren controversies of the schools, forgetting, in unprofitable argument, all the pure, intelligible, and simple doctrines of Christianity.* Thus, while the lower orders of priests were scarcely able to read their breviaries, the more enlightened divines were occupied in discussing speculative points, the decision of which could benefit neither religion nor philosophy. Among other points of useless contention, the degree of honour and dignity to be attached to the birth of the Virgin Mary was a frequent and endless subject of discussion. Bale, in his "Mysterie of Iniquitie disclosed," printed in 1542, ridicules with great propriety the unscriptural exaltation of the Virgin. "The doctrine of these papystes," says he, "have a great shyne of godlinesse, yet it is but fylthie hypocrisie. The blessed Virgine Mary, which was the elect mother of Christ, detesteth for the fryvolouse

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the conversation by relating the miracles performed by Robert, the founder of his order. Becket heard him for some time in patience, but could not at last forbear exclaiming with contempt, "And are *these* your miracles"? *Warton*, vol. ii. p. 232.

* The importance attached to these speculative disquisitions may be estimated by a remark of Erasmus, who, in a letter to the pope, says, "He that differeth from the pope is considered as an heretic." *Fox's Acts and Monuments*, vol. ii. p. 771.

and blasphemouse fablinges they give unto her: As that she was without syne in her conception, and other such foolish fancies. Was not her father a synner? Was not her mother a synner? Was she not brought forth in Adam? Declined she not with all other? Had she no nede of Christ's sufferings with other? Though the papistes superstitiously deny all this, yet doth the swete Virgine affirm it; 'My soul,' saith she, 'magnifieth the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.' What nedeth he to have bene her saver, if nothing had bene in the way to condemnation against her."*

Erasmus thus describes these professors of divinity, who were regarded at the universities as oracles of theological lore: "a sort of wretched creatures, whose brains are rotten, their language barbarous, their apprehension dull and stupid, their knowledge abstruse and knotty, their manners very rough, their speech virulent, their hearts as black as hell." "I will endeavour," he adds, "to talk no pure Latin, to say nothing smooth or smart, and by degrees I may be fit to be owned by them."† A knowledge of the scriptures was not only withheld from the laity, but even from many of the clergy, and the degree of Doctor of Divinity, in the begin-

* *Bale's Mysterie of Iniquitie*, p. 60.

† *Knight's Life of Colet.*

ning of the sixteenth century, was not sufficient to admit a man to the perusal of that sacred volume *, which was so manifestly intended to be addressed to all mankind.

Although the sermons of curates were enjoined to consist of practical illustrations of the homilies, with exhortations to virtue, and to ceremonial observances; although it was especially prescribed to the preachers, not to touch with greater leniency on the vices of clergymen, than on those of the laity †; yet, as public lectures on the scriptures were rare, and as errors of doctrine are not uncommon even in these days religious liberty, it may readily be inferred with what obscurity the tenets of the gospel were surrounded, when they were so partially unfolded, even to the preachers themselves. Imperfect, however, as were the religious opinions of the English clergy, their northern neighbours exceeded them in ignorance; and when informed of the controversy between Luther and the church of Rome, the Scottish monks were even impressed with a belief that Luther was a prophane heretic, who had written a very foolish book called the New Testament.‡

Even at the court of Henry, a degree of

* *Knight's Life of Colet.*

† *Fox's Acts and Monuments*, vol. i. p. 587.

‡ *Jortin's Life of Erasmus*, vol. i. p. 126.

ignorance which would now be thought inexcusable in a school-boy, was displayed by a young divine, who, being appointed to preach before the king, adopted the common topics of the day, and turned his discourse upon the evils of learning Greek, and of attempting to form new interpretations of scripture. Henry, whose acquaintance with Erasmus had taught him to prize a knowledge of the dead languages, exchanged looks of contempt with Dr. Pace, a man of extensive acquirements, and of liberal sentiments. When the sermon was finished, Henry appointed a solemn disputation between the preacher and Sir Thomas More, on the subjects in question: the young ecclesiastic, having few reasons for his assertions, was obliged to declare, that what he had said was prompted by the spirit. "Not," said the king, "by the spirit of Christ, but by the spirit of infatuation." Henry then enquired if the rash disputant had perused the works of Erasmus: he replied in the negative. "Then," replied the king, who delighted to shew his own acuteness, "you are a very foolish fellow for censuring what you never read." At last the young man, not knowing how to defend himself, owned, "that he entertained a better opinion of the Greek than he had hitherto done, because he was now aware that it was derived from the Hebrew." The king,

amazed and enraged at this reply, and deeming so ignorant a person not worth convincing, dismissed him from his presence, with a charge that he should not again presume to preach at court.*

The revival of classical learning immediately preceding the Reformation was productive at first of little improvement in the style of those discourses which emanated from the very source of orthodoxy. Erasmus describes a sermon preached before Julius II. and the whole conclave, as presenting irreverent ideas, expressed in a style obscured by affectation. The orator commenced by an eulogium on the pope, whom he compared to Jove, "vibrating in his hand the inevitable lightning, and regulating the universe by his nod." The death of Christ was said to resemble the self-immolation of Curtius and of the Decii for their country; and his sufferings were described as deserving the pity of mankind, equally with those of Phocion and of Socrates. † With such unintentional prophanity were religious exhortations characterized, even in the presence of the pontiff! But while these deficiencies in devotion, or, to speak more charitably, these errors of taste, inspire disgust, it is

* *Knight's Life of Colet.*

† *Roscoe, Leo X.* vol. iii. p. 145.

agreeable to contemplate exceptions in some members of the clergy of that period, who endeavoured to restore the purity, and to extend the benefits of the mother church. Many, doubtless, there were, who would gladly have contributed to this great work, had their abilities or their means afforded them the power. Instances are not wanting of clergymen, before the Reformation, whose lives were truly apostolic, and who endeavoured, by diminishing the corruptions of the hierarchy to which they belonged, to add security to its unstable foundation. Among these, one of the most conspicuous in virtue and in talents was Dr. John Colet, celebrated as the founder of St. Paul's School, and deserving, perhaps, even of greater fame, for his exertions to introduce soundness of doctrine and integrity of morals among his brother churchmen. Born of respectable parents, his father being a mercer, and twice Mayor of London, Colet was carefully and judiciously instructed in all the learning calculated to form an enlightened and eloquent divine. Observing with regret, those deficiencies in pulpit eloquence which were then the subject of complaint, he endeavoured, by the study of literature, to polish and to dignify his own style in oratory; and while, from an intimate knowledge of the writings of the fathers, he imbibed a por-

tion of their vigorous eloquence, he gained from the Italian and French poets and philosophers variety in his ideas, and an improved mode of expressing the result of his reflections. The labours of diligent study were in that age quickly and brilliantly repaid. When Colet had attained the age of thirty he read lectures on the Epistles of St. Paul, gratuitously, at Oxford; and although he had not, at that time, obtained any degree in divinity, yet his class-room was thronged by doctors, abbots, and divines of every rank; and he was soon afterwards honoured by the degree of doctor, conferred upon him, unsought, by the university. * Not contented with his own meritorious exertions, nor anxious alone to gain personal distinction, Colet, with the desire of diffusing scriptural knowledge among the clergy, endeavoured to induce Erasmus, then residing at St. Mary's College, Oxford, to read
1499. a course of lectures upon the Old Testament; but that learned and cautious person declined complying with this request, alleging his own inability as a reason for his refusal. † On being afterwards preferred
1505. by Henry the Seventh to the deanery of St. Paul's, "where," says his friend,

* *Knight's Life of Colet*, p. 317.
† *Jortin's Erasmus*, vol. i. p. 11.

and eulogist *, Erasmus, "he might preside over the college of him whose writings he so dearly loved," Colet, both by exhortation and example, endeavoured to correct the vices and luxurious habits of the clergy, and to promote sentiments of disinterestedness and of liberality. Attractive in his manners, and handsome in his person, Colet might have obtained at court that ascendancy which such advantages were calculated to procure in the favour of Henry the Eighth; but the views of this pious and great divine had a far higher aim. He seldom attended court, adopted the most simple mode of living, and introduced the custom of wearing black clothes, which were then not common among the beneficed clergy, whose garments consisted of the most costly materials, selected with the utmost attention to splendour. Nor did these particularities proceed from a desire of appearing to possess superior sanctity, or from a frivolous attention to outward distinctions. Adhering strictly to the rules of celibacy prescribed by the church, although condemning them as productive of immorality, Colet had scarcely need of

* "Erasmus, who called him (Colet) his master, has given us a hint of his religious sentiments, in his famous colloquy, entitled 'Peregrinatio Religionis ergo,' in which Colet is the person meant under the name of Gratianas Pullus."

Grainger's Biog. Hist. vol. i. p. 125.

the emolument accruing to him from his preferment; and fearful that abundance of riches might produce in him the evil effects which he beheld in many of his contemporaries, he resolved to devote the bulk of his property to one great and useful undertaking. The institution of St. Paul's School, the first seminary of education founded in this country by a private individual, belongs rather to the annals of learning, than to those of religion. The object of Colet, in the endowment of this institution, was, however, closely connected with the interests of the church. He saw with regret, that the ignorance and licentiousness of its preachers were its most dangerous foes; and entertaining the enlightened views which Wolsey afterwards adopted, he perceived, that to oppose the new and increasing sects, those who were intended to support the ancient establishment should be sedulously instructed in learning and in religion.

In a sermon preached before the convocation, Colet even reproved the haughty and covetous spirit which had insinuated itself into the church. He boldly expatiated upon the necessity of reformation; he represented the evils resulting from the secular employments of priests and bishops, who were thereby constrained to avoid saying any thing, however important or true, which might not be agreeable to their worldly interests.

So bold an orator could not harangue without offending in some quarter. The illiberal and intolerant part of the clergy took up arms against him; and it was only through the good offices of Warham, and the personal favour of the king, that Colet escaped the vengeance of Fitzjames, Bishop of London. It was then the practice of those who relied more upon the outward ceremonies of the church, than upon the force of her exhortations, to read their discourses to the people. This introduction of "bosom sermons," as they were called, was opposed by Colet, who justly considered that extempore addresses from the pulpit are not only far more calculated to exercise the faculties of the preacher, but to interest the attention of a congregation. Fitzjames, who always read his sermons, resented these observations as levelled at himself, and became a determined enemy of Colet. The king, however, possessed sufficient discrimination to estimate the independence of the Dean, who, when ordered to preach at court, neither flattered the virtues of the great, nor spared their vices. When Henry was engaging in a war against France, Colet even expatiated on the benefits of peace, and on the worthlessness of military glory, with so much warmth, that the king reproved him, after the sermon, for an attempt to discourage the army from valorous exploits. But Colet justified himself

so ably, that the king declared, that "others might choose what doctor they pleased, but that Colet was the man for him."*

The valuable example of Colet was unhappily withdrawn from the world at an early and critical period. Soon after the Reformation had commenced upon the continent, the life of this great man was terminated by consumption, occasioned by severe and repeated attacks of the sweating sickness. The anxieties of a public career were, however, spared him; nor had he contemplated with desire the acquisition of worldly glory; in the Carthusian monastery at Sheen he had vainly prepared a secluded retreat, where he had hoped, in the decline of life, to have passed his days in philosophic retirement, with a few chosen friends of habits similar to his own.

1519.

Such were the virtues displayed by Colet; and it is but candid to infer that others, more obscure in their station and less fortunate in their preferment, may have manifested, in their lesser sphere, dispositions equally pious and benevolent. The sentiments of Colet were, indeed, participated by many devout and thinking churchmen, who, like him, lamented the errors of the church which they still reverenced as apostolical; and while it must be allowed that

* *Burnet*, vol. iii. p. 47.

the majority of the clergy were debased by licentiousness, their unpopular and oppressive character must have been protected by some qualities valuable to the people, who warmly resented the innovations, which, at a subsequent period, reduced the monks to beggary. Charity and hospitality, attention to the young, and utility to the sick, a ready compliance with the demands of the reigning monarch, to whom the clergy were liberal in the payment of loans, a careful preservation of literary treasures, constitute the sum of merit which can be allotted to the clergy before the Reformation. In addition to this portion of praise, scanty when compared with the vices attributed to this class of men, it may be remarked that their attention to the ceremonies of religious worship, erroneous as we now consider the notions which dictated it, preserved society, during the darker ages, from an entire oblivion of the principles of religion, to the preservation of which, forms are almost essential.

In the absence of a well established legal jurisdiction, the sanctuaries which the clergy were empowered to afford to criminals were not only acceptable to the people, but even useful; and as frequently afforded a "shield to innocence, as an immunity to crime." The observation is just, as it is beautiful, which has pro-

ceeded from the pen of a modern writer in treating of an earlier period: "In reflecting on the desolating violence which prevailed, we can hardly regret that there should have been some green spots in the wilderness, where the feeble and the weary could find refuge." *

It cannot, however, be denied, that whatever may have been the redeeming qualities of the clergy, the doctrines which they promulgated, and the impostures which they countenanced, were lamentable, if the result of ignorance, and inexcusable, when permitted by those who secretly despised them. "The religion of Christ had degenerated into idolatry: so many saints, so many gods, so many monasteries, so many pilgrimages: as many churches, as many reliques, forged or feigned, we had. Instead of the only living God, we worshipped stocks and stones: instead of Christ immortal, we worshipped mortal blood; instead of *his* blood, we worshipped the blood of ducks." † Such, in the opinion of the celebrated martyrologist Fox, was the state of religious concerns, previous to the dissemination of the re-
1521. formed opinions. The corruptions of the church were, however, regarded in England with less abhorrence in the early part of

* *Hallam's Middle Ages*, vol. iii. p. 351.

† See *Fox's Acts and Monuments*, vol. ii. p. 764.

the sixteenth century, than they had been at an earlier period. The excellent character of some of the most eminent prelates, the devotion to the Holy See manifested by the sovereign, both in the preceding reign and in the early part of the present, and the persecutions with which those suspected of heresy were continually assailed, had silenced the language of dissent. Yet the opinions of Wickliffe, although seemingly suppressed, had already produced a considerable influence on the minds of the people, and had rendered the reception of new doctrines less repulsive and alarming than innovations in religious affairs usually appear.

The doctrine of Lollardism, which was disseminated in this country in 1377, had never entirely lost its hold on the minds of persons in the lower ranks of life; and in vain had its disciples been depressed and intimidated by severe statutes and edicts, and had suffered from unremitting and indefensible persecutions. The very measures enforced against them published their doctrines, and rendered them familiar to the people, who otherwise would have regarded with little interest a sect composed of obscure and illiterate individuals; and while the compassion of the unprejudiced part of the community was excited in favour of sufferings incurred from conscientious motives, their respect was obtained

by the pure and simple manners of the Lollards, set forth to the greater advantage, from a comparison with their proud and luxurious adversaries. The proselytes of Wickliffe were distinguished from the catholics by professions of sanctity, and gravity of deportment, not dissimilar to those peculiarities which characterized the modern sect of puritans; they pretended to the utmost mortification; they affected singularity of habit, and went bare-foot; and were rigid, both in moral conduct and in ceremonious observances.* Nor were the operations of these meritorious reformers confined to this country alone; they had extended to the continent, first by means of an Oxford student, and afterwards through the exertions of one Peter Payn, who brought over a number of converts to his opinions, in Bohemia, where he travelled. Thus, like that warning voice in the wilderness of Jordan, which, in proclaiming one light, indicated to the world the approach of another, far more glorious and resplendent, the tenets of this conscientious and persecuted sect were preparatory to the more successful and important exertions of the Lutherans.

The schism by which the church was divided during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, combined, with the reputed heresies by which it

* *Collier's Eccl. Hist.* vol. i. p. 564.

was disturbed, to injure its vital interests. The private characters of the pontiffs had latterly contributed to diminish a belief in their infallibility, and to render their office contemptible and odious. Alexander the Sixth, abandoned and infamous in his private character, tyrannical, cruel, and treacherous even to a proverb in his public transactions, was so justly and so bitterly detested, that when by an awful retribution he expired, poisoned unintentionally by his son, who, initiated by his father into the practice, had prepared a fatal potion for an enemy, the people of Rome could not satiate their view with the sight of his blackened corpse. Crowding around it, they expressed all those emotions that hatred and contempt could inspire.* The successor of Alexander, Julius the Second, although less profligate than his predecessor, was calculated rather for a warrior than for a vicegerent of Christ, and consulting merely the temporal greatness of the church, forgot the cure of those internal disorders which threatened the safety of the whole structure.† Devout Chris-

* Such is the account of Guicciardini, which I have given because the vindication of Pope Alexander the Sixth, by Mr. Roscoe does not appear to me wholly conclusive. Voltaire observed, (as Mr. Butler has remarked) (See *Life of Erasmus*, p. 84.) that the crimes of this pontiff had been greatly exaggerated. See *Guicc.* lib. vi. p. 227. † Ibid.

tians, regarding with horror the abominable vices of the first, and the turbulent ambition of the latter of these pontiffs, contemplated with hope and satisfaction the accession of a prince of the Medicean house to the papal chair; and the election of Leo the Tenth, benign and liberal, a lover of learning and of the arts, appeared to promise that the love and respect of mankind should be restored to the descendant of Saint Peter. But the very virtues of this pontiff aided the great work of reformation, and gave a final impetus to its progress. His munificence, his love of the arts, of the luxuries which churchmen in those days knew best how to procure and to enjoy, and the magnificent works which he projected, induced him to seek some means of replenishing the papal treasury, which had been greatly exhausted during the two preceding pontificates.

Amongst the means from which the papal revenues were derived, the sale of indulgences had been, since the eleventh century, a resource to the popes in all emergencies. According to the tenets of catholics, those good works of the saints which were more than the number necessary for their own justification are deposited, together with the merits of our Saviour, in "one inexhaustible treasury, from which could be drawn by Saint Peter, or any of his

successors, for a sum of money varying in proportion to the offence, pardon for any sinner who would purchase it, and even for those already in purgatory."* This ecclesiastical fraud had been first adopted by Pope Urban the Second, as a recompence for the crusaders; and his example was followed by Julius the Second, who gave indulgences to all who contributed subscriptions to the building the church of Saint Peter at Rome.† Leo the Tenth, partly for the same purpose, and partly from other motives, extended the sale of indulgences, and granted the profits, as it is stated by Guicciardini, to his sister Magdalen, who appointed one Arcemboldo, formerly a Genoese merchant, to collect the money thus raised; or, according to another account, to Albert, Elector of Metz and Brandenburg. That prince employed as his agent in Saxony one Tetzel, a Dominican friar‡, a bold and licentious, but eloquent man, who expatiated loudly on the merit of indulgences, and on their power to absolve the people of any crime whatsoever. The form of administering this impious mockery of divine forgiveness specified, that the purchasing sinner was not only restored to the "holy sacraments of the church, and to the sacraments of

* See *Robertson's Charles the Fifth*, vol. ii. p. 107.

† Ibid.

‡ Roscoe says, that the sale of indulgences was entrusted to both these parties. See *Life of Leo X.*

the faithful," but to the same innocence and purity that he possessed at baptism. That this was the unspeakable gift of God, in order to reconcile men to himself. That the cross erected by the preacher of indulgences was as efficacious as the cross of Christ himself. "Lo the heavens are open," said the orator; "if you enter not in now, when will you enter? For twelve pence you may redeem the soul of your father out of purgatory; and are you so ungrateful that you will not save a parent from torment?"* Had this audacious imposture been displayed to the world by persons of unblemished sanctity, and of correct lives, the delusion which it produced might have swayed for a considerable time the minds of the low and ignorant, whose state of mental darkness in that period can scarcely be imagined or described; but, fortunately for the dispersion of superstition and error, the morals of Tetzel and of his associates were not such as to recommend their doctrines: and the generality of the people beheld with disgust their drunkenness and debaucheries, and with pity, the credulity of the simple and infatuated persons upon whom they imposed. Even the Emperor Maximilian, although superstitious in an absurd degree, yet, was so irritated by the wickedness of Tetzel, who had been convicted of

* See *Robertson*, note in vol. ii. p. 108.

adultery, that he intended to have had him seized and thrown into the river at Inspruck; had not the interference of Frederick, Elector of Saxony, prevented this termination of Tetzel's career. But although saved from this disaster, this abandoned agent of imposture met with so much merited abuse from Millitz, the pope's emissary at the court of Frederic of Saxony, that he is said to have died of grief.*

So liberal was the catholic faith with regard to absolution of crimes, it was practicable to compound for sins by anticipation. The following anecdote is an instance of this mode of evading the punishments of futurity: —

A gentleman of Leipsic requested from Tetzel absolution of a certain crime which he intended to commit, but which he refused to specify. Tetzel promised the indulgence, provided they could agree as to the price; the money required was paid, and the absolution delivered; but shortly afterwards the compliant Tetzel was way-laid, cudgelled, and robbed of a considerable sum of money by his Leipsic customer, who told him, at parting, that this was the crime for which he had obtained remission.

It could not escape the observation of persons who were possessed of the slightest degree of reflection and of penetration, that such abuses as

* See *Roscoe, Leo X.*

those which have now been detailed were injurious to the vital interests of the church, the ruin of which they would eventually produce; and there were, at this period, many learned men in the western world, who desired a reformation of these errors, without wishing for a total change in ecclesiastical government, the chief evil of which they considered to be those intolerable burdens which were occasionally imposed upon mankind, from religious pretexts.

Among these the most eminent was Desiderius Erasmus, who contributed to the Reformation more, in the opinion of some writers, than either Zuinglius or Luther. Although the parents of this great man were of respectable families, his birth was illegitimate, a circumstance with which he was subsequently reproached by his enemies, to whom he generally made the reply, "that while he acknowledged it as his misfortune, it could not be considered as his crime."* Being constrained by dishonest guardians to enter a monastery, Erasmus, disgusted with the allurements which were thrown out to persuade him to become a monk, imbibed a dislike to the monastic orders which he never entirely lost; and having found means to escape the thraldom of the conventual habit, he passed his life in the

* *Butler's Life of Erasmus*, p. 32.

pursuit of knowledge, in the composition of many works of great powers and learning, and in visiting the different cities of the continent and England, where he repeatedly resided, and for a considerable length of time. The benefits which Erasmus rendered to philosophy and to letters were so much connected with those which he conferred upon the reformed faith, that it is scarcely possible to say which were the most serviceable to society. By inspiring mankind with a taste for learning, he placed the ignorance of the monks in a still more contemptible light than that in which it had hitherto appeared. He ridiculed the observance of minute devotions which the ministers imposed upon the people; and perceiving, that "religion was the least thing regarded in religious houses, he shewed the monks in their true colours, and prepared the minds of the learned for the Reformation. He described the world as burdened with human ordinances, scholastic opinions and determinations, and above all with the tyranny of the mendicant friars, who, though the slaves of the Roman see, yet, had attained a degree of power formidable to princes, and even to the church itself." The power of the gospel he represented as almost extinguished, and that of indulgences raised in its place: the substance of religion had dwindled into observances more than Judaical;

and these things were complained of by all the divines that were not monks."*

With these opinions concerning the state of religious affairs, it may seem extraordinary to persons of an ardent temper, that the conduct of Erasmus displayed so little decision in the controversy that ensued, and of which he may be considered in the first instance as the principal cause and promoter. The sentiments which Erasmus expressed upon the earliest manifestation of the Lutheran doctrines were cautious, though liberal. "If Luther be innocent," said he, "I would not run him down by a wicked faction; if he be in an error, I would rather have him reclaimed than destroyed; for this is most agreeable to the doctrine of Christ, who, in the words of the Prophet, 'would not bruise the broken reed, nor quench the smoking flax.'"† He even evinced an open approbation of many of Luther's opinions, which, especially in regard to the universal study of the scriptures, were in accordance with his own. "Luther," he said, "has given us many a wholesome doctrine, and many a good counsel; I wish he had not defeated the effect of them by intolerable faults. But if he had written every thing in the most

* *Knight's Life of Erasmus*, p. 7 to 29. from *Stillingfleet's Conference of the Idolatry of the Church of Rome.*

† *Knight's Erasmus*, p. 7 to 29.

unexceptionable manner, I had no inclination to die for the sake of truth. Every man hath not the courage to become a martyr; and I am afraid that if I were put to the trial, I should imitate Saint Peter."*

After this confession on the part of Erasmus, it is not a matter of surprize that both parties should since have claimed him as their own; both anxious to have the authority of his opinion on their side. By the moderate catholics of his time, Erasmus was considered as a latitudinarian, whom they imagined to be hanging between heaven and hell†; and the more bigotted Romanists approved his sentiments so little, that they ordered the greater part of his works to be expunged before they would permit the remainder to be perused‡; even the most liberal of catholics in the present day can scarcely justify some passages of his colloquies, as proceeding from a member of the church of Rome.§

The disapprobation which Erasmus expressed of many doctrines of the church, he extended, however, to many tenets of protestantism, which he warmly opposed. Inclined in the beginning

* Note in *Robertson's Charles the Fifth*, vol. ii. p. 140. from the *Epistles of Erasmus*.

† *Knight*, p. 29. ‡ *Jortin*, vol. i. p. 329.

§ *Butler's Life of Erasmus*, p. 159.

of the dispute to the side of the Lutherans, yet desirous of carrying on the controversy with gentleness and forbearance, Erasmus became disgusted with the violence and bigotry of the reformers; and although many of his personal friends were among that body, he was finally alienated from the protestants. The dreadful scenes which occurred from the fanaticism of the anabaptists in Germany have been ascribed as one cause of this circumstance; yet, as he left no proof of his opinions in his will, and as he died among those of the reformed faith, in a protestant town, the private sentiments of Erasmus are still a subject of conjecture.

The services which were rendered by this justly celebrated man to the Reformation, were not confined merely to those masterly satires upon the corruptions of popery which issued from his pen. An edition of the New Testament in Greek had long been desired by the learned, and was first given to the world by Erasmus, before whose publication of it there was not above one Greek Testament to be found in Germany.* This great work was published in 1516, accompanied by a Latin version, and succeeded by an excellent paraphrase, to be set up in all churches, in order to prevent the misconstructions of the preachers. It need scarcely be remarked how

* *Knight.*

important a preparation this was to the reception of the reformed doctrines, to the basis of which the attention of mankind had been thus opportunely directed.

It cannot but be strikingly apparent to the dispassionate reader of history, how admirably Providence seems to have adapted the principal instruments of the Reformation to forward the great result which they had in view; each man possessing abilities and dispositions suited to the attainment of the same object, unintentionally, without combination, and almost, as it would appear, accidentally directed to the same end. While Erasmus, by his oblique and popular satires diminished the respect of mankind to the holy orders, and displayed their corruptions in undisguised absurdity, Zuinglius, a canon of Zurich, had shaken the foundation of papal authority in Switzerland, by an intrepid exposure of abuses from the pulpit; and it is still a matter of dispute between the Swiss and Germans, which of these countries had the earliest share in the dissemination of the new opinions. The precedence, however, must in justice be accorded to Zuinglius*, who, moderate and prudent, but zealous and energetic, had begun to question the supremacy of the pope before even the name of Luther was known in Germany; and as early as the year

* *Mosheim's Eccl. Hist.* vol. ii. p. 29.

1516 he began to explain the scriptures from the pulpit, and to censure without virulence the errors of the church. In 1519 he opposed, with all the force which pulpit oratory possesses, when exercised with wisdom and sincerity, the iniquitous sale of indulgences, commenced in Zurich by one Samson, a monk; but in this particular measure he had been anticipated by Luther *, who had delivered exhortations, two years before, against a similar abuse in Germany. In several points of dissent from the church of Rome, Zuinglius even exceeded Luther; he did not wholly discountenance the adoption of violent proceedings against an adverse party; and he is said to have attributed a greater degree of power in religious affairs to the civil magistrate, than is consistent with a respect for spiritual authority. Simple and upright in conduct, possessed of extensive learning, and displaying intrepid courage, this great man died in 1530, fighting for the cause which he had so eminently promoted.

Among those men still attached to the church of Rome, yet desirous of setting just limits to her overgrown power, was Philip Melancthon, professor of Greek at the University of Wittenberg, the personal friend and disciple of Luther. Convinced by the subsequent controversy be-

* *Mosheim*, vol. ii. p. 29.

tween Luther and Eccius of the superior merits of Luther's cause, and approving of his design to rescue the science of theology from its obscure state, and to establish it on the basis of scripture; Melancthon was yet averse from engaging in virulent disputes, which he held to be contrary to the spirit of Christianity; and his love of peace rendered him desirous of establishing a reformation, without a separation from the mother church. The acquirements, and the sincerity of Melancthon, cause us to regret that a constitutional timidity prevented the full exercise of those powers by which the meritorious exertions of other reformers might have been more extensively benefited. Although of the same opinion with Erasmus, yet he would have preferred a middle course, in preference to the decided measures adopted by Luther: as he considered, that the doctrines of Luther, though well-founded, were enforced with want of temper and of judgment; and he could not divest himself so entirely of the prejudices of his youth, as not to dread an open rupture with that hierarchy which, in spite of its corruptions, he had long been accustomed to revere as an apostolic church. But if the gentleness and prudence of Melancthon were impediments to all the utility which might have been derived from his genius, they rendered the Reformation less obnoxious to many

well-disposed, but cautious persons, who learned, from the example of Melancthon, that moderation was not incompatible with a desire of innovation and improvement.

It was, however, reserved for the bolder spirit of Martin Luther to become the chief instrument of a reformation in religious opinions; and we must regard him as the main spring upon which all the inferior movements of the great work depended. This celebrated man was born at Eisleben in Saxony, the offspring of indigent parents. The native vigour of his energetic understanding had been strengthened by a solid education, which, while it had placed him on an equality with other learned men, had not destroyed the originality of his character. Presuming, satirical, and careless of the feelings of others, the mind of Luther was yet devout and reflective; and the death of a companion, who perished at his side in a thunder-storm, operated so powerfully upon the gentler qualities of his heart, that he considered it as a warning to withdraw from worldly pursuits, and accordingly took up his abode in a convent of Augustinian friars. "Here, leisure and opportunity, which he knew well how to employ with indefatigable perseverance, enabled him to attain superiority over his brethren, not only in the pursuits then fashionable among the learned, but in the power of reasoning

upon the real character and nature of the doctrines which then prevailed, the value and orthodoxy of which was blindly and implicitly received by minds of an inferior order. An accidental discovery greatly facilitated the researches of the young theologian after truth. He found, in the convent library, a copy of the bible, which lay neglected and forgotten by the monks, who placed a far higher value on the labours of the fathers and philosophers, than on the inspired writings of the prophets. It was with surprize that they beheld Luther discard all other pursuits, and devote himself alone to the study of the scriptures."* Enlightened by this source of wisdom and knowledge, he soon felt and expressed a thorough contempt for the schoolmen, whom he was afterwards wont to designate with his usual and characteristic grossness and virulence, "sophistical locusts, frogs, caterpillars, and vermin."†

The fame of Luther's learning and piety having rapidly extended to Frederic, Elector of Saxony, who had founded a college at Wittenberg on the Elbe, Luther was appointed by him, first a teacher of philosophy, and afterwards of religion, in that seminary of learning. In these capacities Luther continued to distinguish himself, when the sale of indulgences by Tetzel, in

* *Robertson's Charles the Fifth*, vol. i. p. 96. † *Jortin.*

the vicinity of Wittenberg, drew him from his ordinary career, and brought into play those great powers of intellect which only required opportunity to be fully developed. He began first to inveigh in the pulpit against the doctrine and sale of indulgences; and, in his bold and eloquent harangues, which attracted many hearers, and gained numerous converts to his opinions, he received at first rather encouragement than reproof for his temerity from the Augustine friars.*

It has been asserted, that the exhortations of Luther were prompted by the interests of his order; and the world, too averse, in general, to assign the most honourable of probable motives to the actions of men, has credited the groundless accusation of jealousy and party spirit against this violent and prejudiced, but disinterested reformer. The sale of indulgences has been erroneously stated to have been taken from the Augustine monks, and conferred upon those of the Dominican order, on account of the superior activity displayed by the latter in augmenting the papal revenues; and to this transposition has been ascribed the enmity which Luther manifested to the imposture. The privilege of vending these sources of wealth was, however, alternately enjoyed by all the four mendicant

* *Lord Herbert*, p. 70.

orders, among which the Augustinians had discovered less solicitude to obtain the charge than their contemporary monastic brethren. The sentiments which Luther entertained upon the subject of indulgences were by no means singular, nor is it necessary to seek for some sinister and paltry inducement for his invectives against them, when the similar proceedings of Zuinglius are remembered. In England, reflections had been already thrown out against this pernicious doctrine; and it was remarked, as Lord Herbert affirms, that even offences against law were compromised by the agents of the pope *; but contempt and abhorrence of the fraud were almost universal among the more enlightened clergy of the western world.

Having, for some time, maintained a desultory warfare upon the papal agents, the next proceeding of Luther was to address a remonstrance to Albert, Archbishop of Mentz, to whose jurisdiction Wittenberg was subject, exhorting that prelate to check the propagation of indulgences; and to restrain the mercenary spirit of the venders of those impositions, lest this scandalous abuse should occasion a rupture in the church.† But Albert turned a deaf ear to this petition, which militated not only against the interests of the pope, but against his particular profit, since he retained half the revenue derived from the sale of indul-

* *Herbert*, p. 70. † *Collier*, vol. ii. p. 8.

gences in his own treasury. Tetzel, however, was not long silent; but, shortly afterwards, published several theses in opposition to Luther, in which he not only defended the benefit of indulgences with some eloquence, but even complimented Leo the Tenth so grossly as to compare him to the Apostle Saint Peter.* These compositions being much commended by the orthodox party, Luther, after replying to them, thought it the most direct method to address himself directly to the pope. Accordingly, in a tone of great respect and submission, he wrote a letter to Leo, entreating his holiness not to believe any of those calumnies which imputed heresy to his opinions, and "desiring to lay his life and writings at his holiness' feet, telling him, that whatever decision should come from his holiness, he should look upon it as an oracle from heaven, or as if it had been pronounced by our Saviour himself;" "neither should he refuse to die, if his holiness should think that he deserved it;" sentiments very different from those afterwards expressed, in the course of the same controversy, by the scurrilous and uncourtly pen of the great reformer. This soothing language was not, however, displeasing to the ears of Leo, who was far from considering the conduct of Luther, at that early period, as inimical to the papal power,

* *Herbert*, p. 70.

Silvester Prieras, master of the sacred palace, who, together with one Eccius, a divine, answered Luther on the subject of indulgences, attempted in vain to infuse into the mind of the pope a sense of the heretical nature of those doctrines, "Brother Martin," observed Leo, "is a man of superior genius, and his enemies are little envious monks." On another occasion, speaking of Luther's treatises upon the point in dispute, "a drunken German," he said, "wrote them; when he hath slept out his sleep, and is sober again, he will be of another mind."

The indifference of the pope to the alarming progress of the new doctrines was severely censured by some of his party, who were of opinion, that if the spark had been smothered in the first instance, it would never have risen into a flame. Whatever probability this surmise may possess, the most rigorous measures were inforced against heretics. When the exhortations and arguments of Luther began to be popular, the unhappy Lollards were persecuted with fresh rigour, especially in England, and by Longland, Bishop of Lincoln, in his diocese; and Henry, in the meridian of his zealous adherence to the court of Rome, was fiery against the unfortunate victims. In this year, we find him issuing a letter to enforce the attendance of the civil power in the diocese of Lincoln, whenever

the bishop might require its aid, against the heretics.* The Inquisition, which, probably from a scarcity of victims, had been of late inert in its operations, now resumed its persecutions, and was established in France, where a decree was made by the primate to confirm the canons of the council of Lateran against heretics. In Germany the spirit of persecution was equally active.† "The court of Rome," says the biographer of Erasmus, "and the ecclesiastics, were generally abhorred and despised; nevertheless it was thought that had the cup been granted to the laity, and marriage to the clergy, Lutheranism would have come to nothing."‡ That Luther was, at first, extremely unwilling to proceed to those extremities, to which these persecutions incited him, is also generally admitted.

The controversy, however, proceeded with increasing warmth. Luther, insensible to fear, advanced continually to some new proposition, until the pope, exasperated by his boldness, cited him to Rome, and desired that no protection should be afforded him by the Elector of Saxony; but afterwards, imprudently retracting this summons, Leo permitted Cajetan, his legate,

* "All mayors, sheriffs, bailiffs and constables, &c. are enjoined, as they value our high displeasure, to aid, help, and assist the right rev. father in God." 20th Oct. Given at Windsor. *Wilkins's Concilia*, vol. iii. p. 698.

† *Jortin.* ‡ Ibid. vol. i. p. 124.

to hold a conference with the reformer in Germany, with a discretionary commission to offer him, not only pardon, but preferment, should he prove submissive. But Luther was neither to be bribed nor intimidated; he behaved with so little courtesy in the conference, that Cajetan losing temper, menaced him, and bade him depart: and although Luther afterwards apologized for his freedom, the quarrel became more and more bitter, and proceeded, till a bull from the court of Rome, setting forth the virtue of indulgences as a doctrine not to be disputed, drove Luther to extremities, and determined him to keep no measures with the pontiff. He now boldly appealed to a general council respecting the truth of the doctrines which he had broached; and, addressing the pope in a very different style from that which he had formerly adopted, he affirmed that his holiness was "liable to the infirmities of other men;" reminded him "that Saint Peter had once failed, and had been severely reprimanded by Saint Paul; and that the successors of Saint Peter could not pretend to be more infallible than that great apostle had shewn himself." This appeal, strange as it was to papal ears, gained Luther an increase of fame, and of proselytes; and drew from the court of Rome a fresh bull, condemning forty-two points in his books, and con-

signing all his works to the flames.* For this decree, Luther revenged himself in a manner truly characteristic of his temper, by publicly burning the bull and the decretal in the University of Wittenberg, together with the writings of Eccius, and Euser, pronouncing, as he committed them to the flames, these words: "Because ye have troubled the holy one of the Lord, ye shall be burned with fire."†

It appears extraordinary, on a first view of the subject, that during the course of this controversy, the rash and violent conduct of Luther was not instantly resented by the papal power; and that a suspension of the proceedings against Luther, during eighteen months, between the first and second papal bull, allowed him a period of tranquillity: but the political views of the pontiff, in this instance, interfered with his ecclesiastical functions; and to the protection of Frederic, Elector of Saxony, whom it would have been detrimental to the interests of Leo to have offended, may be ascribed the impunity with which Luther maintained his opinions. The impolicy evinced by Leo, in so long forbearing to take decisive measures against this dangerous foe, has been blamed with reason: his procrastination allowed time for Luther to strike out new doctrines; the result of his investigations into

* *Collier's Eccl. Hist.* vol. i. p. 9. † *Roscoe.*

the divine writings, and for those opinions to become familiar and agreeable to the people. It has been remarked, that if Zuinglius had boldly seconded the exertions of Luther, and that if Melancthon and Erasmus, who with greater caution encouraged them, had been unanimous in their operations in promoting the Reformation, its advancement would have been far more speedy, and less disturbed.* But Luther was ill calculated to conciliate even those who favoured or coincided with his opinions; and so impetuous and annoying was his mode of carrying on the warfare, that he has been aptly, though inelegantly, compared by Burnet "to a postilion in his waxed boots and oiled coat, lashing his horses through thick and thin, and bespattering all around him."† He called Zuinglius "an ass," and abused him even more vehemently after his death. Erasmus, whose courteous demeanour and cautious writings accorded not with his taste, offended him afterwards in a controversy about freewill, and received from him the appellations of "Arian, Epicurean, a profane scoffer, an enemy to all religion."‡ The mild and intelligent Melancthon also drew forth his irony for a credulous belief in astrology.§

* See *Lord Herbert.* † See *Burnet*, Pref. p. 13.

‡ See *Jortin*, from *Luth. Colloquia Mensalia.*

§ *Jortin*, vol. i. p. 155.

The reformers had many differences among themselves, on speculative points, which sometimes disturbed their internal harmony. The doctrine of transubstantiation, though in the main rejected by Luther, had still some hold upon his mind; while Zuinglius, and Carolostadt, a professor of the reformed faith at Wittenberg, regarded the bread and wine merely as symbols of the body and blood of Christ, intended to excite devout emotions in the minds of the communicant. Luther was also more averse to persecution than either Zuinglius or Carolostadt; and when the latter threw down the images in churches, and led on his disciples to sedition and tumult, Luther exhorted him first to eradicate error from the minds of the people, before he made war upon its outworks; since error being once removed, its ensigns would fall of course.* The favourite doctrine of Luther was justification by faith alone, and not by good works, either "moral, legal, or evangelical†;" but he considered virtuous conduct as essential to salvation. "Jerome," said he, "should not be numbered among the teachers of the church, for he was an heretic; yet nevertheless I believe he was saved through the faith in Christ: I know none among the teachers whom I hate

* *Mosheim*, vol. ii. 47. † *Jortin*, vol. i. p. 120.

like him; for he writeth only of fasting, of victuals, of virginity, &c.; he teacheth nothing of faith, nor of hope, nor of love, nor of the works of faith; truly I would not have entertained him for my chaplain."*

Luther was so violent in his anger, even against the reformers, when they offended him, that when writing to a Protestant divine, who was not of his sentiments respecting the eucharist, he applied to him and his party the first verse of the psalm: "Blessed is the man that hath not walked in the counsel of the *Zuinglians*," &c. Nor was this lover of truth even free from prejudices, which might have belonged to a much earlier period than that at which he lived; for he believed that madmen and idiots were actually possessed by devils, and that physicians were wrong in ascribing their disorders to natural causes.†

Of all the numerous works which Luther published, his German translation of the Bible is pre-eminent in utility. Among the other innumerable benefits which it produced, it obliged his adversaries to study the scriptures, in order to obtain any chance of refuting him; a result the more to be desired, as hitherto, at some of the universities of the Continent, there had been no public instruction upon the Testa-

* *Jortin*, p. 121. † *Ibid.* p. 123.

ments. Of these Luther recommended a plain and practical exposition, instead of that allegorical and mystical mode of interpreting divine writ, which is liable to error and misconstruction, and which is rarely felt by the hearts of a congregation. Luther also blamed those preachers who attempted to explain the apocalypse to the people, observing, that if a divine should preach upon it for twelve months together, neither the pastor nor the flock would be benefited by it "either in faith or manners."*

Such were some of the peculiar opinions of this celebrated man: his character presented a strange combination of opposite qualities. While experiencing the most sublime emotions of piety to God, he indulged in a spirit of uncharitableness to man, which the religion he professed teaches us to condemn and eradicate. An enemy to persecution, he could not resist bearing down an adversary with relentless and overwhelming abuse and satire; and, scurrilous and coarse in his controversial writings, Luther was capable of feeling all the sentiment of music, in which he was both a composer and performer, and of which he was accustomed to say that it put to flight the devil, who mortally hated music. Nor was he insensible to a desire for poetic fame; and the severer labours of the great

* *Jortin*, vol. p. 119.

reformer were varied by the composition of Latin and German poems.

Contumacious towards his partizans, it was not to be supposed that Luther would exercise much forbearance with regard to his opponents; this very independence of spirit had, however, its beneficial as well as its injurious effects; it impressed his followers with a sense of the powerful character of that man who could spurn his coadjutors for minor differences of opinion, when himself in a situation of emergency and peril; and his contempt of all ranks and conditions was soon fully exemplified, when a royal antagonist entered the lists. The king of England had viewed the singular contest between the supreme pontiff and an obscure Augustine friar, with an indignation that burned to express itself.

Not contented with a proclamation against the works of Luther, which he designated as "pestiferous, cursed, and seditious errors,"* Henry caused them to be burned at St. Paul's, in the presence of Wolsey. The cardinal went in state to the spectacle, which afforded a mournful prognostic of the bloody scenes of which it was the harbinger. Four doctors of divinity supported a canopy of cloth of gold over the head of Wolsey,

May 12, 1521.

* *Wilkins's Concilia*, vol. 3. p. 736.

and the bishops followed in procession. Dr. Pace, dean of the church since the death of Colet, received the cardinal, who, after making his oblation at the altar, proceeded to the cross in the church-yard. Here, on a scaffold purposely erected, Wolsey seated himself under his cloth of state, with his two crosses by his side: the ambassador of the pope, and of the emperor, and the Archbishop of Canterbury, sitting at his feet; the bishops were ranged below. Then Fisher, Bishop of Rochester, preached a sermon, in which he declaimed against Luther, and denounced a curse, in the pope's name, against all those who retained the works of that bold heretic. During this harangue most of the offensive books were burned.* To commit the arguments of Luther to the flames was, however, only an exertion of authority; to confute them, was deemed by Henry an office worthy of his reputation as a learned and orthodox theologian.

Instigated partly by vanity, in some measure by his hereditary reverence for the church, and chiefly by the advice of Wolsey, who was, with himself, greatly incensed by Luther's disrespectful treatment in his writings of their standard of biblical learning, Thomas Aquinas, Henry, during this year, published a Latin treatise in reply to the reformer,

* *Cottonian MSS. Vitell.* 64. p. 111.

entitled a "Defence of the Seven Sacraments against Martin Luther," and dedicated to the pope. "Your holiness," says the king in his prefatory address, "may be surprised to find a person bred to war and business of state, engage in a controversy of this nature with a man that has spent his whole time in the improvement of learning."* Yet, "although somewhat unequal to the combat," the king professes, "that his alarm for the church, his zeal for the christian religion, and his regards for the holy see, induce him to draw out against the enemy, which had appeared in the field, and overrun the country with so much desolation; and, though his abilities were but moderate, there were no studies that had so much engaged his attention, or had been so much enjoyed by him as controversial learning." The king, therefore, dedicates the work to his holiness, to make it "more public and serviceable, submitting the correction of its defects to the same source."†

Unfortunately for the literary reputation of Henry, the world, incredulous as to the industry and perseverance of a mind so pampered by flattery, has attributed all that is valuable in this work to the assistance of Bishop Fisher and of Sir Thomas More. "None," says the humorous Fuller, "suspect this king's lack of learning

* *Collier*, vol. ii. book 1. p. 11. † Ibid.

(though many his lack of leisure from his pleasures) for such a design; however, it is probable some other gardener gathered the flowers (made the collections,) though King Henry had the honour to wear the posie, carrying the credit in the title thereof."*

Erasmus, whose early and intimate acquaintance with the king made him a competent judge upon this point, believed Henry to be capable of composing this work, and reminded those who differed from him of the great care which Henry the Seventh had bestowed on the education of his sons. The book was highly extolled by the pope, to whom it was presented in full consistory, by Dr. John Clarke, Dean of Windsor, the English ambassador at Rome, to whom his holiness not only gave his hand, but his cheek to kiss, as a token of peculiar approbation. The treatise was richly bound, and laid up in the

* *Fuller's Church Hist.* p. 166. book 5.

It was printed in 1521, by Richard Pynson, in French, in Latin, and in English, by order of the king, under the title: "Assertio Septem Sacramentorum adversus Martyn Lutherum, edita ab invictissimo Angliæ et Franciæ Rege et Do. Hyberniæ Henrico ejus nominis octavo." The copy in the Vatican has these lines upon it, written in the king's hand, "Anglorum rex Henricus, Leo maxime, mittit, hoc opus et fidei testim. et amicitia." *Butler's Memoirs of the Cath. Church*, vol. i. p. 27. Strype mentions an early printed copy of it in the library of Dr. Moore, bishop of Norwich. It is usually shewn to Englishmen at the Vatican.

Vatican as a rarity, where it still remains. By order of Wolsey several copies were bound, and written with peculiar care and splendour, and the most perfect of these was presented to the pope, having been previously inspected by Henry.* Indulgences also were granted to all who should peruse this treasure, which was at first designed to be presented to the pope in manuscript.† Leo rewarded the production with praise which would have suited the inspired effusions of a prophet; and declared that "the King of England must have received the assistance of the Holy Ghost." Nor was the fame diffused by this specimen of learning confined alone to the royal controversialist. The country, which produced so erudite a monarch, was supposed to be rich in talent and in knowledge, and was regarded by her neighbours on the Continent as the seat of wisdom and of orthodoxy.* The reception of this celebrated work was soon followed by a bull from the pope, conferring upon the king the title of "Defender of the Faith ‡:"

* *Strype's Mem.* vol. i. p. 51. † See *Burnet*, vol. iii. p. 30.
‡ See *Burnet*, vol. iii. p. 30.

It was disputed in conclave whether the title of the orthodox, the faithful, the angelic, or apostolic, would not be more appropriate. It is remarked by catholic writers that the kings of England should either pursue that course of conduct which procured them this title, or relinquish the appellation. See *Roscoe's Leo X.*

a denomination which neither Henry nor succeeding monarchs have deemed it inconsistent to retain, even since their authority has established doctrines wholly opposite to the tenets of that work by which it was obtained.

The treatise was, however, highly calculated to entitle Henry to this distinction from the papal power. It attacked Luther on the several points of his heresy, including the holy eucharist, the necessity of good works, on which Luther placed little importance, penance, confession, the satisfaction to be derived from absolution, confirmation, matrimony, holy orders, and extreme unction. In controverting the doctrines of his opponent, the king judiciously draws his arguments from the holy scriptures, as the true source of theological learning, and proves himself by no means deficient in biblical knowledge. In conclusion, he applies to Luther a passage in the Epistle of St. James, in which that apostle inveighs against those who contemn good works as immaterial to salvation. "I have sometimes wondered," says the king, "what made Luther disrelish St. James's Epistle; but, upon reading this portion of holy scripture, I find the reason of his dislike plain enough; for the apostle seems to write with a prophetic spirit, as if he saw the character and conditions of Luther. Luther is a great contemner of good

works in comparison of faith; now St. James disputes strongly against this heterodoxy; the Apostle proves both from reason and scripture, that faith without works is dead."

It has been allowed by many historians, that this disquisition contained sound reasoning and biblical knowledge, delivered with energy and propriety; at the same time, it is apparent from its style, that it was written by one accustomed to command compliance, rather than to require conviction. The king, as Collier expresses it, "leans too much on his character as monarch, argues in his garter robes, and writes as it were with his sceptre." Whatever might be its defects, or its merits, it produced little or no benefit to the cause of papacy: reformation proceeded with rapid strides, and Luther, undaunted by his powerful antagonist, replied with coarse and indecent abuse to the arguments of the king. For this contumacy, he afterwards, indeed, expressed much contrition, and, in another letter to Henry, declared, not only his consciousness of error, but his willing-
1526. ness to repair it by a public recantation.

But as this apology was mingled with various observations ill adapted to please the king, it is not to be wondered that it rather exasperated than conciliated the royal polemic; Luther not only reprobating in this letter the

Cardinal of York, as a "favourite," a "monster," a "person hated by God and by man, and the plague of the kingdom," but informing the king without ceremony, that he understands upon credible authority, that the book de Septem Sacramentis was not his composition, but that of some persons who, having "more cunning than conscience, had borrowed his majesty's name, never considering the danger they run themselves upon, by throwing such a scandal upon their sovereign." Not contented with this compliment, he concludes with an observation, not very agreeable to crowned heads, "that it was rather a wonder that there was one single prince in the interest of the gospel;" concluding with a quotation from the Psalms, in illustration of this courteous remark: "the kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord, and against his anointed." *

To this letter the king replied with more temper than might have been expected. His answer contained chiefly a repetition of his former arguments, with a defence of Wolsey, and a solemn assertion, that his celebrated treatise was his own.

"Although you fayne yourself to think my boke not my own," says the royal polemic,

* *Collier*, vol. i. p. 13—21.

"but to my rebuke, (as it lyketh you to affyrme,) put on by subtell sophisters; yet it is well knowne for myne, and I for myne avouch it." *

This epistle closed the controversy between these disputants, on whom the attention of all Europe was turned during the period of their warfare. Meanwhile, Henry, encouraged by the commendations which attended his exertions for the faith, which his holiness denominated "a certain admirable doctrine, sprinkled with the dew of ecclesiastical grace," and proud of his titulary dignity, determined to repress the growing sect of Lutherans in England. He empowered Wolsey to issue a commission, by virtue of his legatine office, enjoining notice to be given at mass-time, that all who had in their possession any of Luther's works should deliver them, under pain of excommunication, to the bishops of their several dioceses, who, on their part, were commanded to forward them to the cardinal. Not contented with this proceeding, Wolsey also caused a list of Luther's heretical opinions, forty-two in number, and designated in the commission, by the terms "damnable and pestiferous errors, which had taken root as a noxious briar," to be posted up on the door of every parish church and cathedral, in order that every per-

* *Butler's Memoirs of Catholics*, vol. i. p. 26.

son might read and avoid these heresies.* By thus propagating the seeds of schism, the cardinal, with his view of the merits of the cause, acted in direct contradiction to the result of experience, which pronounces ignorance of error to have in some degree the security of virtue.

To counteract the pernicious heresies, as they were then reputed, which were disseminated throughout the country, a book written in refutation of the new doctrines, by Fisher, Bishop of Rochester, received the approbation of the king, and was printed at Antwerp, in the year 1523. Thus, one act of religious zeal succeeding another, Henry was at this time regarded as the most devoted adherent, and as the most powerful supporter of the see of Rome; and had not worldly interests and passions severed him from her tenets, the mother church would still have regarded him as one of her most exemplary saints.

* *Wilkins's Concilia*, vol. iii. p. 698.

CHAP. X.

Causes which promoted the progress of Reformation. — The art of Printing. — Value of Books. — Unsettled state of continental affairs contributing to the success of the new opinions. — Leo X. — His death and character. — Wolsey aspires to the papacy. — His disappointment on that head fortunate for the English Protestants. — Wolsey's unpopularity. — His arrangements with the Emperor. — The Imperial Ambassadors arrive in England. — Entertainments at Court. — Feast of the Garter. — Arrival of Charles in England. — Henry's eagerness to display his maritime forces to Charles. — Remarks upon the Navy at this period. — Foundation of the Trinity House. — The other important improvements of which Henry the Eighth was the author. — Enlargement of Ships. — Compliment paid by Charles to the English Fleet. — Description of the Henry Grace à Dieu. — *Diversions at Court. — Procession through London.*

THE period of the Reformation is remarkable for many other changes and improvements besides those in religious affairs. Among the principal innovations upon old customs, the use of the press may be considered as of supreme importance, not merely as promoting the diffusion of general knowledge, but as the powerful coadjutor of those to whose efforts the Protestant church is indebted for its redemption from

absurd and dangerous fallacies. The progress of reformation was aided by several casual circumstances, of minor importance among the great causes which influenced that momentous change, yet obviously tending to produce the same result. It is curious that the origin of an art which produced evident effects both on religion and on literature, may, with some probability, be deduced from a familiar pastime, less beneficial, in general, to society, than most of those diversions which afford recreation to the studious, and employment to the idle part of the community. The introduction of cards in the fourteenth century, is supposed to have given the first suggestion of taking impressions from engraved figures on wood; the art was next applied to the representation of saints and religious devices, to which were added pages of text, cut in the same block; and the formation of metal types in a mould, which constitutes the peculiar character of printing, was the final result of ingenuity and perseverance.* This invention, which was completed about the year

* This art originated in Germany, and was first practised at Mentz, by one Faustus, or Fust, a goldsmith. The first book that issued from the press of Mentz was an edition of the Vulgate, commonly called the Mazarine Bible, a copy having been discovered in the library of Cardinal Mazarine at Paris. *Hallam*, vol. iii. p. 598.

1450 or 1455, belongs to an earlier era; but its effects had scarcely been fully extended to England when Henry the Eighth ascended the throne.* It had, indeed, been introduced into this country in 1471, by Caxton, who, uniting the qualifications of a translator to those of a typographer, added many valuable works to the scanty store of literary productions which our country then possessed.† To Caxton succeeded a number of industrious and even of learned artists, the chief of whom was Wynkyn de Worde, through whose means the first classical works, printed in the original, were introduced into this country.‡ Wynkyn continued his laborious exertions

* *Hallam's Middle Ages*, vol. iii. p. 599.

† The printing-office in which Caxton carried on his useful labours, was situated in one of the chapels adjoining Westminster Abbey; the monks generally made use of a similar edifice for their scriptorium or transcribing room. The chapel allotted for Caxton's purpose was, probably, pulled down, together with another dedicated to the Virgin, in order to make room for the reception of the beautiful chapel which Henry the Seventh erected to contain his tomb. *Ames's Hist. Printing*, vol. i. p. 103.

‡ Wynkyn and his numerous servants performed all the parts of the printing business, and were also bookbinders and booksellers. *Grainger's Biog.* vol. i. p. 147. It is singular that the art of printing rose immediately to perfection. In the Advocate's library at Edinburgh is a bible printed in 1480, the type of which is acknowledged by judges to be superior to any thing performed by our modern printers. The punches which Wynkyn invented are still used in all the printing-houses in London.

during the greater part of the reign of Henry*; and although the imperfection of the Greek and Hebrew types prevented the rapid extension of classical learning, many persons who were not in a situation to meet the expences attending the transcribing of manuscripts, were induced, by the existence of a press, to compose works in the English tongue.† Hence, the expression of the popular feeling was facilitated, and those statements which had long been suppressed, not only from reverence for the church, but from the difficulty of publication, were now disclosed with comparative copiousness. As the revivers of classical learning were, in most cases, to be found among those who favoured the Reformation, the printers usually took part with that party which their patrons favoured, and were generally engaged in the service of the Lutheran side of the controversy. It therefore became no easy task for the Papists to persuade these artizans, who knew their own importance, to print their trea-

* Richard Pinson was also another pupil of Caxton's, and was printer both to Henry the Seventh and Eighth; he died in 1528. Grafton, another typographer, flourished in the reigns of Henry the Eighth, of Edward the Sixth, of Mary, and of Elizabeth, and published "An Abridgement of the Chronicles of England," and "A Chronicle and large meere History of the Affayers of England, and Kinges of the same, deduced from the Creation of the World." 1569. *Grainger*, vol. i. p. 148.

† *Warton*, vol. iii. p. 124.

tises *; and so inimical to their doctrines was the typographical art considered, that the more bigoted members of the clergy inveighed against it with bitterness. The vicar of Croydon, as well as other preachers, in the reign of Henry, judged it necessary to declaim against it at St. Paul's cross; exclaiming, in the course of his exhortation, "either we must root out printing, or printing will root out us."† While printing assisted the dissemination of the Lutheran tenets, it received, in turn, from the eagerness which prevailed among all ranks to become acquainted with the new doctrines, a degree of encouragement which would scarcely have been afforded by mere literary curiosity. The middling ranks of people, from the immense value and scarcity of manuscript books, had been almost entirely debarred from the enjoyments of that free perusal of the thoughts of others, in which we luxuriate, almost to satiety, in the present day. They soon eagerly sought the treasures which were offered to their view: and it was impossible for the press to keep pace with the demand made by the public, hitherto in a state of mental starvation, and hungering after the "bread of life." The most interesting of all subjects now partially unfolded

* *Lingard*, vol. vi. p. 137.

† *Wordsworth's Eccl. Biog.* Note, vol. i. p. 284.

to their view, all persons in this country, who could read, were seized with a natural impatience to become possessed of the supreme benefits of which they had been so long and so unjustly deprived. A translation of the scriptures, in the vulgar tongue, was subsequently purchased at an exorbitant price by those who were fortunate enough to meet with it: a load of hay was sometimes given in exchange for a few chapters of St. James or St. Paul, and five marks were frequently expended in the purchase of one book.*

While the invention of printing disseminated the new opinions, and induced many persons to become writers, who had formerly scarcely been readers, the Reformation was accelerated also by the unsettled state of Europe, which prevented the princes of Christendom from forming with the church of Rome, such an union as should strengthen the tottering fabric. Germany, from the ancient contests between the popes and emperors, was never well affected to the see of Rome; it was therefore the first to throw off a yoke which was as odious to them as the controul of their own princes, whose authority the majority of the German nobles desired to exchange for that of the empire. The Emperor, Charles the Fifth, was too much engrossed by the intestine commotions of Spain, and by the hosti-

* *Wordsworth's Eccl. Biog.* vol. i. p. 290.

lities with Francis, in which their mutual rivalship engaged them, to adopt active measures against Luther, until the tenets of the reformer had gained considerable ground.

Leo the Tenth, occupied in endeavours to regain the towns of Parma, Placenza and Milan, which had been wrested from the papal dominions by the French, allowed impunity to the bold reformer during the space of two years, until the innovations, as they were considered by the papists, were too firmly rooted to be eradicated: the death of this pontiff, which occurred suddenly, occasioned therefore no material effects in religious affairs. The dissolution of Leo is said to have arisen from the excess of joy produced by the success which attended the arms of his general, Prospero Colonna; and which brought on a fever of so violent a nature, that it terminated the life of the pontiff eight days afterwards.* The character of Leo has met with little mercy either from papists or protestants; living

* Some writers have attributed the sudden death of Leo to poison, infused by his chamberlain into his linen, and thence infecting the pores of his body. (See *Fiddes's Wolsey.*) Leo was attacked by illness at Malliani, a village to which he often resorted for recreation. When his symptoms became alarming, he ordered that he should be removed to Rome, where he expired. See *Guicciardini.* Roscoe observes, that had a violent paroxysm of joy been the cause of his death, the consequences would have been more rapid.

Suspicions of poison fell, unjustly, upon Francis the First, with whom Leo was engaged in hostilities. *Fiddes*, p. 280.

at a time of dissension, the diminished glory of the church of Rome has been, by one party, ascribed to his want of energy, or of policy; while the other, considering the ruling pontiff as the personification of all the errors and corruptions of the hierarchy over which he governed, have treated him with more injustice, and bestowed upon him a greater portion of calumny than any of his predecessors had encountered.

The indifference with which Leo regarded the subjects of occasional discussion which were considered of importance by the divines of his own church, affixed upon him the charge of atheism; and his enemies sought to confirm the imputation by various unfounded assertions. Among other accusations of profaneness, Leo was said to have made the following remark to Cardinal Bembo, who was quoting some passage from the Evangelists; "It is well known how profitable this fable of Christ has been to us;" but the authenticity of this anecdote, which bears strong marks of improbability, has been satisfactorily confuted by a modern historian.* The versatility of tastes and pursuits with which Leo varied the monotonous tenour of the papal court, and the enlargement of his mind, which rose above the superstitions of churchmen, were sufficient, from

* *Roscoe's Life of Leo X.*, vol. iv. p. 328. Also *Fiddes's Wolsey*, p. 278.

the violent excitement of party prejudice, to stigmatize him as a buffoon, a man of profligate habits, and a profane scoffer at religion. Time, however, often obliterating in its progress facts which might throw light on character, by softening also strong points, and by defining shadows, affords us, in some instances, a more faithful delineation of past events, than the actors in the very scene may probably have possessed. The Antichrist of the Protestants, and the inert betrayer of the papal interests in the eyes of the Romanists, Leo the Tenth, appears, to our calmer view, a patron of literature and of the arts, and a virtuous, enlightened, and benevolent churchman.

On the death of Leo, both Henry and Wolsey expected that the vacant chair would fall to the lot of the cardinal. In this expectation Wolsey presumed not only upon his well-known abilities and influence, and upon the importance of the nation to which he belonged, but upon the promised assistance of the emperor, whose power in the conclave was undoubted, since he could command the votes of fourteen cardinals. Full of hope, Wolsey lost no time in sending a dispatch to Rome; and Dr. Richard Pace was entrusted with the commission. That useful and experienced diplomatist, who afterwards incurred the displeasure of his patron, was charged

to persuade the remainder of the cardinals to countenance the views of Wolsey, especially by representing to them, how essential to the church, at this critical juncture, was the election of a man who would be supported by a prince of so much power and importance as the English monarch. Letters were also addressed by the Cardinal to Charles, reminding him of his promises, and containing assurances that in case of his succeeding to the papacy, the interests of the emperor should obtain his decided preference over that of the other European potentates. Finally, as no possible chance was to be neglected, Wolsey failed not to conciliate Francis by similar intimations, which were also immediately forwarded to that prince. *

But all these manœuvres were unsuccessful. Charles, who probably never intended, by raising Wolsey to the papal see, to give so great a proportion of influence to Henry, chose rather to place in that eminent station a person peculiarly devoted to his own interests; and Adrian, Bishop of Tortosa, formerly his tutor, through his influence, and by means of intrigues and factions in the holy conclave, was elected before Pace could arrive in Italy. Wolsey, although secretly writhing under Charles's treachery, commanded Pace to complete his journey in order to congratu-

* See *Fiddes*, 282.

late the new pope in his name, and to declare that he was sent to favour the promotion of Adrian. Consoled by the reflection that the advanced age of his rival would not altogether preclude his ambitious views, and encouraged by the intelligence that a considerable party in the conclave had declared themselves in his favour, Wolsey determined still to smother the flames of his wrath, and to await the next vacancy with patience.*

It is curious to reflect upon the important consequences of this disappointment to the aspiring hopes which Wolsey had cherished. Even this event may be considered as apparently directed by the hand of Providence to forward the interests of the reformed church. The consequences of that closer connection between the English nation and the see of Rome, which must have been formed with Wolsey, removed in the zenith of his power, at its head, may readily be conceived. The devotion of Henry to the papacy would have been strength-

* Such is the common statement of various historians; but *Burnet*, in the third volume of his *History of the Ref.* p. 30 and 35, infers, from some original letters of Wolsey's, that the cardinal did not apply for the pontifical honours until after the death of Adrian. If this be the case, the supposition that Wolsey, in revenge for his repeated disappointments, suggested the divorce between Henry and Katharine, has less probability. This accusation against Wolsey may be refuted also by other statements.

ened by private regard to the pontiff; the enemies of the church would have become his personal foes, and could never have obtained an entrance into his councils; and, with a monarch who was so entirely swayed by passion as Henry, and inaccessible to any reasoning which was not aided by the bias of his own inclination, it is more than probable that the elevation of Wolsey to the papal chair would have occasioned proceedings in this country against the Lutherans, of so rigorous a nature, as to have entirely crushed that party during the space of some years.

It is not, from these remarks, to be inferred, that Wolsey was an implacable enemy of those who conscientiously differed from the received doctrines of the church, or that he indulged in an intolerant or bigoted disposition. The mind of Wolsey, like that of Leo the Tenth, was superior to the narrow prejudices of many of his contemporary ecclesiastics. Desirous of meeting the reformers on their own ground, and of opposing "learning to learning*," averse to persecution, and indifferent to those frivolous observances with which the formalities of the Roman church abound, these great men knew both the errors and the real interests of the church.

* *Herbert.*

It was at this time that Wolsey, either with a view of reconciling the public mind to
1522. the impending hostilities, or because he saw the inutility of the practice, published a dispensation from sin and punishment to all those who should eat white meats during the season of Lent.* This indulgence was, however, contemptuously rejected by the populace, who attributed to the counsels of Wolsey all the inconveniences of a general proscription of the realm, by musters throughout the kingdom, for which the king, at this time, gave a commission, in order to ascertain the wealth and military power of his dominions.† This measure had now become necessary, as a war with Francis the First appeared inevitable, since that monarch was greatly incensed at the capricious conduct of Henry, and at the intrigues of his minister.

The treaty which Wolsey had concluded in the name of his master, at Bruges, with the emperor, had been followed by an arrangement for the emperor to visit England on his passage from the Netherlands into Spain, and an union between the young Princess Mary and Charles was also in contemplation. Henry, who on all occasions was proud of displaying the splendour with

* *Herbert*, 114.

† *Hall*, 633. Also *Stowe's Chron.* p. 516.

which his court abounded, considered the promised interview as a compliment little inferior to that which had been paid him by Maximilian, when he entered the English army as a volunteer. Accordingly the Imperial ambassadors, who arrived in this country early in the spring, were entertained with great courtesy, and jousts were appointed for their diversion. These sports were succeeded by a sumptuous banquet given by Wolsey to the king, and to the ambassadors, on Shrove-Tuesday.

March 1522.

The noble strangers were conducted into an apartment hung with cloth of arras, and lighted with torches of wax. At the lower end of the chamber was a castle, in the principal tower of which was a lighted cresset, or standing lamp. This tower was guarded by two lesser ones, warded and embattled, and from the summit of each were suspended banners, with devices depicted upon them. This castle was guarded by ladies fancifully designated as *Beauty*, *Honour*, *Perseverance*, *Kindness*, *Constancy*, *Bounty*, *Mercy*, and *Pity*; and these damsels were attired in Milan gowns of white satin, and in Milan bonnets of gold, adorned with jewels, each lady having her name inscribed on her head-dress. Underneath the lower fortress were females of very different appellations; and *Danger*, *Disdain*, *Jealousy*, *Unkindness*, *Scorn*, *Slander*, and *Strange-*

ness, appeared there in garments of India. Then entered a company of lords, with the king at their head, in the characters of *Amorous*, *Nobleness*, *Youth*, *Attendance*, *Loyalty*, *Pleasure*, *Gentleness*, and *Liberty*. This band, preceded by *Ardent Desire*, in robes of flame-coloured satin, assaulted the castle, which was defended by some of its fair inmates with rose water and comfits. The lady *Scorn* and her company repulsed the assailants with bows and balls, but were at length constrained, with the rest of the besieged, to yield to a shower of dates and oranges, from the hands of their opponents. Then the lords took the ladies as prisoners by the hands, and dancing was commenced. This entertainment, which affords so absurd a contrast to the serious business which occupied the attention of those who were engaged in it, was highly commended by the ambassadors.* It is worthy of remark, that no apparent indecorum was in those days attached to the impropriety of these puerile amusements in the residence of the legate, and of one who was evidently considered as the head of the English clergy.

Previous to the arrival of the emperor, the king, on the day of St. George, held a
1523. solemn feast of the garter at Richmond, and created two knights of that order;

* *Hall*, p. 633.

Ferdinand, the brother of Charles the Fifth, and Sir Richard Wyngfield, who had been already knighted by the emperor, at whose court he had acted as ambassador, and from whom he received a pension for his diplomatic services. *

On the 25th of May, Henry, being apprized that it was the intention of Charles to visit Calais, on his way to England, dispatched the Marquis of Dorset, and a company of knights and gentlemen, to receive the emperor at that town, as the entrance of the British dominions, and about the same time Wolsey set out for Dover, followed by a splendid train of nobility, bishops, abbots, knights, and gentlemen, all sumptuously attired in velvet and satin. The day on which Wolsey arrived at Dover, witnessed also the landing of the emperor, attended by a number of Spanish and Flemish nobles. The Cardinal received the Imperial guest on the sands, where these two celebrated men met as equals, and embraced; the emperor taking Wolsey by the arm, until they mounted their horses, and rode together to Dover Castle. Meanwhile, Henry, impatient to behold his relative and ally, had hastened to Canterbury; and hearing that Charles had reached the shores of England, proceeded from that town to Dover. But it was not alone a spirit of hospitality which prompted

* *Hall*, p. 633.

Henry thus to receive the emperor on the very spot where he had just landed: the English fleet now lay at Dover, ready not only to repel invasion from the French, but to manifest to Charles the superiority which England had already acquired in maritime affairs.

The wise and unremitting attention which Henry, in conjunction with Wolsey, had bestowed upon the naval interests of his kingdom, afforded that monarch reasonable grounds of self-approbation and of pride; and he may justly be considered as having secured, by his judicious and liberal policy in this instance, the present independence of this country. In the midst of expensive pleasures and amusements, Henry, since his accession, had expended vast sums upon improvements in ship-building, upon docks, wharfs, harbours, and naval ordnance. By the diligence and liberality of this king, our Navy Office was first established, and commissioners appointed, as at present*; and in 1512 he established the corporation of the Trinity-house at Deptford, to which he added in the ensuing year a magazine for naval stores. This valuable institution remains to the present day, with augmented powers, and increased utility. The corporation, besides other privileges, has the office of nominating pilots to the king's ships; of

* *Arch.* vol. vi. p. 186.

deciding causes of complaint between merchant ships; and of examining the forty mathematical boys in the school of Christ's Hospital, which Edward the Sixth, emulous of his father in the munificence of his public institutions, afterwards established.*

Conformable to the spirit of improvement which actuated Henry in the foundation of the Trinity-house, was his care in building, restoring, and preserving the forts and havens by which the eastern shores of England were, in particular, defended from the incursions of continental foes. To Henry the Eighth, Gravesend is indebted for her present importance; since, perceiving the necessity of some protection to the entrance of the Thames, he first placed a platform of cannon there; and to increase the security of the capital, he afterwards planted another battery on the opposite shores of the river, on the site where Tilbury Fort was subsequently erected.† On the still more important harbour of Dover, Henry likewise bestowed considerable labour, and great, but useless expence.

* The Trinity House Corporation has also the charge of clearing and deepening the river Thames by ballast hoys; and of supplying the shipping with ballast thus raised. Henry afterwards founded two similar institutions at Hull, and at Newcastle-upon-Tyne. *Anderson's History of Commerce*, vol. ii. p. 11.

† Ibid.

The haven of that port having been almost entirely destroyed, Henry, according to Camden, endeavoured to erect "a mole or pile, wherein ships might ride with greater safety." It was constructed with great difficulty, according to that historian, by fastening large beams together with iron, and throwing them into the sea. Immense quantities of wood and stone were then heaped on, in order to give stability to this imperfect foundation; but these efforts, as it might well be expected, proved fruitless. "The fury and violence of the sea," observes the narrator, "was quickly too great for that prince; and the frame of the work, by the continual beating of the waves, began to disjoint, and fall into decay;" but this did not take place until after it had cost Henry, according to different statements, either six or eight thousand pounds in the vain endeavour.†

It was in the harbour of Dover that the greater portion of the English fleet now lay at anchor. In the spring of the preceding year, Henry had given instructions to the Earl of Surry, Lord Admiral, to repair and new-rig the vessels, and to assemble all those which might be deemed fit for service, in the Downs.‡ It was about this period

* *Camden's Britannia.* See *Archaeologia*, vol. vi. p. 120.

† *Lambard's Perambulations of Kent*, p. 471.

‡ *Hall*, p. 362.

that the monarchs of Europe began to vie with one another in the creation of a maritime power, of which the discovery of the New World had manifested the advantages. Previous to this event, naval architecture had been considered as a science of subordinate importance, and the art of navigation had scarcely any other rules than those founded upon experience. Charles the Fifth, observing the ignorance of his mariners, and the dreadful accidents which frequently occurred in voyages to and from the West Indies, had already founded an institution in Spain, which is thought to have been copied by Henry, in his formation of the Trinity House Corporation.* The King of France had also increased and improved his navy, and he could boast, at one time, of possessing one of the largest ships in Europe, the Cordelier, which was lost in an engagement off Brest, in 1512, when grappling with the Regent, the principal vessel in the English fleet. James the Fourth of Scotland had expended thirty thousand pounds in building a ship named the Great Michael, which is said to have been the model of the Regent.† But all these meritorious exertions were now surpassed by Henry, in the fabrication of the

* *Anderson's Hist. Commerce*, vol. ii. p. 24.

† *Henry's Hist. Eng.* vol. xii. p. 342.

Henry Grace à Dieu, the largest and most splendid vessel that had ever yet floated on the bosom of the Atlantic ocean. This ship, as well as the Regent, was built at Woolwich, where the most ancient dock-yard in England was situated *; and a representation, affording an accurate idea of all its parts, is preserved in an old painting at Cowdray, depicting the landing of Charles the Fifth at Dover, in 1520. To understand all the merits of that improvement in ship-building of which the Henry Grace à Dieu afforded a specimen, it is necessary to observe, that it is the first ship on record having port-holes in her side for guns. She is also represented in the picture, which affords a complete and indisputable memorial of her, as possessing four masts, a circumstance uncommon at that period, when there is great reason to suppose that the majority of vessels were constructed with one mast only. The most ancient form of marine vessels in this country is to be found on the coins of Edward the Third, which had a ship on their reverse sides, a practice which continued until the reign of Charles the First, with respect to the nobles, rials, and angels of our sovereigns. Until the time of Henry the Eighth, all these coins represent a ship with one mast, and one

* *Anderson*, vol. ii. p. 24.

sail only; one of the George nobles of Henry, probably cast early in his reign, presents the same; but on another coin of his reign (a six angel piece) is found a ship with three masts, a circumstance which fixes a date to the enlargement of our ships of war, although the introduction of cannon, the probable cause of this increase, occurred about the middle of the sixteenth century.*

The Henry Grace à Dieu carried a considerable number of cannons, beside eighty guns†, having also port-holes for many more. It was therefore no vain compliment, but an acknowledgment of the simple truth, when Charles and his retinue declared on visiting the fleet, "that they had never seen ships so armed." This declaration was, doubtless, highly gratifying to the king, and he resolved to perpetuate the well-earned fame which his munificent patronage of naval architecture had thus obtained. For this purpose, instructions were given by his commands to Anthony Anthony, Master of the ordnance, to commence a drawing of the *Henry Grace à Dieu;* which was not completed until the year 1546, when it was presented to the king. This production is still preserved in

* *Arch.* vol. vi. p. 186.

† According to Hall, 19 brass and 103 iron guns. It required, says the same historian, a crew of 700 men. *Hall*, p. 635.

the Pepysian Library, in Magdalen College, Oxford; at the same time, the painting, which has been previously mentioned as still to be seen at Cowdray; was also begun, and it not only affords an idea of the magnitude and splendour of the Henry Grace à Dieu, but conveys a pleasing and curious representation of the celebrated characters who trod its deck, at the visit of Charles to the British shores.

Henry is depicted standing on the main deck, with a bonnet and feather on his head: he is dressed in a garment of cloth of gold, edged with ermine; his jacket and sleeves are of scarlet, and his breeches of the same; while on his left hand stands a person, supposed to be Wolsey, in a violet-coloured suit, with red stockings. Behind him are three other persons evidently of distinction. The vessel itself appears of great height, considerably above the edge of the water, being built after the manner of the Venetians; and in this respect, as well as in the great length of its mast, and in the number of its decorations, adapted for the stillness of the Adriatic, rather than for the rough passages of our northern seas. The design which Henry is supposed to have entertained, of asserting his claims upon certain parts of the French territories *, appears in the standards of this vessel,

* *Anderson's Hist. Comm.* vol. ii. p. 24.

which were alternately surmounted with the white and green rose, and the fleur-de-lis; but the unicorn, which has been erroneously stated as one of the ornaments of the vessel, was not introduced into the royal arms until the reign of James the First.* The figure upon the stern seems to represent a lion; and the sails are of cloth of gold damasked; but all this splendour was destroyed in the reign of Queen Mary, this magnificent vessel being burned in the dock-yard of Woolwich, owing to the carelessness of its crew. †

It was about this time that considerable improvements were introduced in the manufacture and management of ship ordnance: ships were now also reckoned by tonnage and poundage, a regulation which had become customary in 1512; and, that cannon were in use both in the French and English navies, appears from a clause in a treaty between Louis the Twelfth and Henry. ‡ These, however, were constructed chiefly of iron, as the foundries for brass cannon were not established in England until the year 1535. It may seem remarkable, that amidst the prevailing taste for invention, stones were still the instruments of

* *Arch.* vol. vi. p. 110. † Ibid.

‡ Mentioned in *Rymer's Fœdera.* See *Anderson.*

destruction instead of iron bullets, which were yet undiscovered.*

The men of war which the emperor and Henry had now beheld lying at anchor in the Downs, amounted in number to fifty-three, including gallies and pinnaces, containing 6255 guns, and carrying seven thousand, seven hundred and eighty men; forming altogether a superb fleet, when compared with the few vessels, scantily manned and feebly armed, with which the predecessors of Henry, from the deficient state either of their treasuries or of the arts, had been obliged to remain content. Having viewed this scene, enhanced in the eyes of the emperor by the pleasures of novelty, and in those of Henry by pride and hope, the two monarchs proceeded to Canterbury, where the mayor and aldermen received them before the gates of the town, with a solemn oration, which was answered by the secretary of the emperor. On the ensuing day the royal train arrived at Rochester, whence they removed, after a night's repose, to Gravesend: here they took boats at one o'clock, and at six on the same evening landed at Greenwich, where the emperor was welcomed at the hall-door by the queen and the princess Mary; and having, ac-

* *Anderson's Hist. of Comm.* vol. ii. p. 11.

cording to the fashion of the times, intreated a blessing from his aunt, the Imperial guest was conducted to apartments so splendidly furnished, that his retinue, unused to similar magnificence, could not refrain from expressing pleasure and astonishment.

On the 6th of June, the king and the emperor entered London in the most solemn and
1523. superb procession which the city had as yet witnessed, except at coronations. The recapitulation of such ceremonies is, however, wearisome and unimportant; and few novelties occurred in that which now enlivened the capital. On the entrance of the monarchs into the city, they were joined by the mayor and the aldermen; and here the eloquence of Sir Thomas More, first attracted public admiration, in an harangue which he delivered in praise of the two princes. * After listening to this oration, the king and his imperial guest proceeded to Southwark, now a scene of business and of confusion, but then a suburb affording a convenient and agreeable residence to many of our principal nobility. It was in this suburb, that Charles Brandon Duke of Suffolk resided, in a magnificent palace, which falling into the hands of his sovereign after his death, was

* *Hall*, p. 637.

converted by Henry into a royal mint.* Here the clergy in copes, and bearing crosses and censers, joined the procession, which was soon arrested in its progress near the King's Bench and Marshalsea prisons, by culprits who sued, and obtained their pardon, through the intercession of the emperor. The two monarchs then approached London Bridge, that curious and ancient monument of the skill and perseverance of an industrious churchman. Peter, curate of St. Mary Colechurch, a celebrated architect in the twelfth century, twice rebuilt this venerable pile, and died four years after the completion of his second task, which occupied him thirty-three years.

This singular fabric exhibited a very different scene, in the sixteenth century, to that which it displays at present. The arches were disfigured by houses, which leaned in a terrific manner inwards, so as to form a narrow, dark, and dangerous street, frequently intersected by pieces of wood which were necessary to support the

* This mansion, which was then called Southwark Palace, retained its dignity in the reign of Edward the Sixth, who once dined in it. The mint having the privileges of a sanctuary, became so great a nuisance from the number of desperate characters who harboured there, that it attracted the notice of parliament, which, in the reigns of William the Third and George the First, abolished this abuse. *Pennant's London*, p. 53.

buildings; most of these miserable dwellings were, in the time of Henry, inhabited by pin or needle-makers, who were chiefly foreigners, as it was not until the reign of Elizabeth that the art was communicated to the English. In the centre was a drawbridge, which was useful for the admission of ships into the upper part of the river, and which was also an effectual defence to the city; the protection of a strong tower being added to that means of obstructing the progress of an enemy.* Here the sorrowful spectator might frequently witness, in days of trouble, the heads which had been decapitated on Tower-Hill †, a sight which was, too often, beheld by the citizens of London in the reign of Henry the Eighth.

As the procession advanced towards this spot, the company perceived that the drawbridge was defended by two giants, personages of no less importance than Hercules and Sampson, who were thus incongruously united in defence of the passage to the metropolis. After gazing upon a pageant which was here presented to their view, the two sovereigns proceeded to the conduit in Gracious ‡ Street, a leaden cistern with a castel-

* This drawbridge served to repulse the bastard Fauconbridge, in his general assault upon the city in 1471. *Pennant*, 448.

† *Pennant's London*, p. 448.

‡ Grace-church Street.

lated front, accessible by steps, which, in conjunction with other similar erections, at this period, supplied the city with water, brought from the distant village of Tyburn. * A conduit was a favourite and convenient place of deposit for a pageant, and, accordingly, the citizens could not resist the opportunity of introducing to the emperor Charles, the renowned Charlemagne, who, having two swords in his hand, presented to Charles that of justice, to Henry, that of triumphant victory; while to the pope, an effigy of whom was placed before him, the hero accorded the crown of thorns and three nails from the cross.

From Gracious Street, the royal train proceeded to Leadenhall, a large plain building, which had been presented to the mayor and city of London by the celebrated Whittington, in 1408; and which served in the time of Henry as a public granary of corn, in case of a famine, under the care of surveyors, who in this reign were first appointed to that charge. It is creditable to the citizens of London, that this important edifice became the property of the city through the liberality of one individual, and was converted

* *Stowe's Survey of London*, p. 11.

Tyburn, or Tyebourn, not, as has been erroneously stated, from the mode of capital punishments, *Tye* and *Burn*, but from the word *Bourne*, Saxon for a brook, added to *Tye*, its original name. *Pennant's London*, p. 242.

into a public granary by another member of their community, Sir Simon Eyre, draper of London, who also erected a chapel within the square. At Leadenhall, preparations for city triumphs or pageantry were usually made: it was considered, from its strength, to be the principal fortress within the city, in case of popular tumults; and it was also used as a place whence doles, largesses, and alms were to be distributed; a custom which was observed at the death of Henry, who probably little thought of that hour, as he stood gazing on a pageant, when his body should here be exhibited in state, while large sums of money were given to the indigent for the repose of his soul. *

From the specimens which have been adduced, it may be readily conceived with how absurd a species of representation the passage of the monarchs was varied; but one of the pageants merits to be recorded, as affording an instance of the gross blasphemy which was permitted at this period to enter into the diversions even of the most polite society. As the procession moved into the Stockes Market, then the great depository of provisions for the city, now the site upon which the Mansion House is erected, the beholders perceived an artificial garden of flowers, curiously wrought; about which, in the language

* *Pennant*, p. 583.

of Hall, "was made the water full of fyshe; and above it was the elementes, the planettes, and the spheres in their places, and every thing moved; and in a type in the toppe was made the Trinitie with the angels singing, and the Trinitie blessed the emperor; and under his feete was written, 'Beholde the lover of peace and concorde.'"*

After witnessing this revolting and impious spectacle, the procession passed through the Poultry into Cheapside, then denominated Chepe, or Market, from the number of splendid shops with which it abounded. Chepe was celebrated in ancient times not only for its goldsmiths shops of great magnificence, but for its conduits, the necessity of which is now happily superseded by the superior inventions of an improved æra; and for its ancient standard, where in former times the heart of the humane passenger was sometimes afflicted by the sight of executions, thus barbarously and indecently performed in the very centre of business.†

At length the two monarchs arrived at St. Paul's, when after offering at the high altar, they returned to the monastery of Blackfriars, at which the emperor was lodged, whilst his nobles were conducted to the contiguous mansion of Bridewell, from which a gallery, covered with arras, was constructed, leading to the

* *Hall*, p. 639. † *Pennant*, 555.

apartments of the emperor.* It was not without considerable trouble and expence that this arrangement had been made; the old residence of Bridewell, used by many of our early kings, had fallen into decay, and had been rebuilt by Henry in six weeks, in order to prepare it for the reception of the emperor, yet, for some reason, which is not specified in the chronicles, this mansion was thought unworthy to receive the emperor, who continued at the Blackfriars; although, in the opinion of Hall, "the new palace was so richely adorned of all things, that his wit is dull to describe them." It was afterwards suffered to fall into disuse, was begged by Bishop Ridley from Edward the Sixth for some charitable purpose, and ultimately converted into a house of correction.†

At Blackfriars, the view from which, in the time of Henry the Eighth, was enlivened by ships, which were admitted into the upper part of the river by the drawbridge, the emperor remained six days. The first day he passed in the diversion of tennis; on Whitsunday he attended high mass at St. Paul's, and was afterwards conducted by the king into the chapel of Henry the Seventh, and Westminster Hall, at the size of which the Spaniards were greatly astonished. On the following Monday the two monarchs dined with the

* *Hall*, p. 640. † *Hall*, p. 640. *Pennant*, p. 305.

Duke of Suffolk at Southwark, and hunted in the park; and the remainder of the week was spent in a similar manner at Richmond, Hampton Court, and at Windsor Castle, where the emperor and king remained for some days in earnest conference, attended by the privy council and the foreign ambassadors. To vary the fatigues of business, a disguising or play was contrived in the great hall, representing a proud horse which would neither be tamed nor bridled, until *Amity* sent *Prudence* and *Policy* to subdue, and *Force* and *Puissance* to bridle the restive animal. This pageant, in consonance with the predominant temper of the king, conveyed a political allusion; the horse designating the King of France, and *Amity* denoting Henry as the arbiter of Europe.

Towards the close of the week the emperor and the king left Windsor, Charles having previously appeared in the chapel of St. George in his mantle of the garter, where he was sworn with Henry on the sacrament mutually to observe all the articles of the treaty there concluded.

From Windsor the two monarchs proceeded to Winchester, the emperor hunting the hart as he went; and from Winchester they journeyed to Southampton, where the Spanish fleet, consisting of a hundred and eighty sail, awaited the arrival of the emperor. Here the Earl of Surrey received

the two monarchs, having been recalled from Ireland, where he had repressed the inroads of the O'Neales, and O'Carrols, and governed with temperance and popularity; and where he was succeeded by Pierce Butler as lord deputy. The services of Surrey were now required to take the command of the English fleet; and, accompanied by many brave commanders, he left Southampton with thirty sail, under pretence of clearing the seas for the emperor's passage. Charles, who knew the love of Henry for empty titles, repaid in distinctions, which cost nothing, the solid advantages which he had derived from his visit; and, by conferring on Surrey the honour of being his lord admiral, as well as that of England, he gratified the partiality of the king for this distinguished commander, and humoured the sense which Henry entertained of his own importance.

The purposes of Charles were fully answered in this visit; his favour with Wolsey was insured; hostilities with France were declared; his treaty of marriage with the Princess Mary concluded, with the promise, not only of her hand when she should be twelve years of age, but of a dowry of 400,000 crowns: and assistance in money was obtained from the lavish Henry, who was obliged to extort from his subjects the means of gratifying his own vanity and prodigality.

Meanwhile the sweating sickness, which had raged with little intermission since its first ravages in 1517, carried off four brave commanders; Sir Edward Poynings, Sir John Peachy, the Lord Brook, and Sir Edward Belknap. These officers had distinguished themselves at the field of Ardres; and for the honour of Englishmen, willingly would the record be omitted, that their death was attributed to poison, supposed to have been administered by the French on that occasion. Daily experience shews us, that when the passions of men are inflamed, they are apt to consider calumny as justice, and the language of detraction as that of truth. Among those distinguished men, of whose services the king was, in this instance, deprived, the most remarkable was Sir Edward Poynings, a member of the privy council, and an experienced and faithful servant of Henry the Seventh. Employed in the preceding reign to defeat the conspiracy of Perkin Warbeck in Ireland, Poynings had also endeavoured, in his office of lord deputy, to civilize the barbarous inhabitants of that disturbed and unhappy country. Besides the statutes which have been already mentioned as enacted by Poynings, he procured an act to be passed, obliging the Irish barons to appear in Parliament with their robes, a formality which was intended to raise

the dignity of the government in the eyes of a factious and headstrong people. But, although judicious in some respects, the grasping character of Henry the Seventh induced Poynings to impose a heavy burden upon the Irish people, in order to increase the revenues of his master, who only possessed a sovereignty over a portion of Ireland; and this tax, which was levied upon land, was long felt by the more industrious part of the community, whom it principally affected.*

Francis the First, incapable of the base action with which he had been charged, rendered a generous, though perhaps an involuntary, compliment to the English nation, when he first discovered the treaty into which Charles and Henry had entered. "I fear not," said he, "these allies; Spain has no money, Flanders has no soldiers, and as to England, my frontier is strong and will defend me."

The Earl of Surrey had begun, however, to make Francis sensible of the power of valour, aided by activity and judgment. Instead of serving merely as an escort to the emperor's return, he had proceeded direct to the coast of France, and making a descent on the coast of Bretagne, took Morlaix, and burned and plundered that town, from which he derived a large

* *Fuller's Worthies*, vol. i.

booty, and where he caused fifteen or sixteen ships to be destroyed. This invasion was seconded with vigour by the English garrisons in Calais and Guisnes, which made successful attacks upon the enemy; and Surrey, after rewarding many of his followers with the honour of knighthood, returned to England, by the command of the king, from whom he received every possible demonstration of favour, and to whose gratified ear he had the honour of relating
July. that the Admiral of Bretagne, with a hundred horsemen, and the same number of archers, had fled from Morlaix at his approach.*

In Scotland and Ireland Henry had cause to dread the effects of the French influence, which he knew had been exerted against him in both these countries.

Scotland had been for some years a scene of continued and desolating contentions. The Duke of Albany, retained in France agreeably to a treaty made between France and England in 1519, had been suffered, or rather enjoined, by Francis to return, in October 1521, in the expectation that he would give some employment to the English troops on the border. The Scots hailed the regent with joy, for they were weary of the distractions with which their country was harassed; and Queen Margaret regarded his

* See *Hall*, who makes no mention of Surrey's escorting the emperor back to Spain, as noticed by Rapin and others.

return with equal satisfaction, for she, too, was disgusted with matrimonial thraldom, and at variance with the Earl of Angus, her husband. This princess, who possessed all the impetuosity and pride of her brother's temper, unsoftened by that inherent gentleness which should be the peculiar characteristic of woman, had been urged to fury by the stings of jealousy, and had even applied, through the Duke of Albany, for a divorce from the court of Rome, alleging, among other reasons, that her first husband, James the Fourth, had been seen alive three years after the battle of Flodden, at the period of her marriage with Angus, a circumstance of which she endeavoured to avail herself in order to prove the illegality of her second marriage; but this measure was unsuccessful at the time, although Margaret was afterwards divorced from her husband.

The first proceedings of Albany were to banish the Earl of Angus and his brother from the kingdom, considering them as the firm adherents of the English faction. They took refuge in France. A parliament being summoned, the regent received an intimation by a herald on the part of England, that his return to Scotland was considered as an infraction of the treaty, and that it had been effected with a view not only to obtain the Scottish crown, but with the hope of espousing Margaret, for whom the regent had soli-

cited a divorce from her husband. Henry also dispatched a letter to Queen Margaret, to which that high-spirited woman returned a reproachful answer, upbraiding her brother with unkindness, which had driven her to seek the protection of Albany. The regent, encouraged by the assurances of assistance which parliament afforded in his favour, returned a denial of the charges preferred against him in the king's letter; and received, in rejoinder, a declaration of war on the part of Henry. Neither Albany nor Henry were, however, really anxious for war; for after some inroads into Scotland, by Lord Dacres, at the head of the troops, and after the advance of the regent to revenge these, as far as Carlisle, the latter, perceiving the dislike of the nobles to a war with England, demanded a truce, which was obtained; but Henry refusing to include Francis in the treaty, there appeared so little prospect of permanent tranquillity, that Albany thought it expedient to return to France, in order to crave assistance and counsel from Francis.

Feb. 11, 1522.

Henry the Eighth began, now, to feel the evil effects of that prodigality and improvidence which had marked his course. He had entered into hostilities which he could not justify by any reasonable pretence, nor by any plea of utility to commerce, to the interests of which it was

obviously destructive. He had, therefore, little right to expect a subsidy from parliament; and in this emergency, his only resource was in the fertile genius of Wolsey, who being the chief promoter of the war, was bound to find some expedient to support its expences. He sent therefore for the mayor and aldermen of
Aug. 20. the city; and after informing them that the king had dispatched commissioners into the different counties, in order to take a survey of the property of every individual, declared himself to be appointed to raise that part of the contribution which the city was to supply. Thus authorised, he proceeded to state, that his royal master required only the tenth of their property, to be paid in money or in jewels; a demand to which he conceived they could not object, as the clergy were already rated, and had delivered, in every shire, a fourth part of all their respective property. This address was by no means agreeable to the corporation; and they complained, with justice, that scarcely two months had elapsed since twenty thousand pounds had been demanded and obtained from the city: and they also remonstrated against the measure, on the grounds that their credit in trade might be essentially injured by this arbitrary exposure of their circumstances. To prevent this evil, Wolsey, after endeavouring to flatter their im-

portance by affirming that he knew the city to be worth two millions of money, and after stimulating their loyalty by assuring them that the king expected they would behave as loyal subjects, proposed that their estimates should be laid privately before him, and a loan received from each according to what he could afford; a plan which was adopted, and their property investigated by one Tounys, the cardinal's chaplain. But this proceeding afterwards created considerable discontent.*

The survey thus proposed was arranged in imitation of one which had been taken in the time of William the Conqueror, and was carried on in the following manner: — "A warrant was issued to every constable of every hundred, to appoint the constables of each parish to appear before them on a certain day, bringing the names of every person above sixteen years of age. A general meeting of every inhabitant of each hundred was then appointed, at which every person above sixteen years of age was obliged to declare his name, to whom he belonged, the lord of every town or hamlet, the stewards and parson of each town, the value of every benefice, who were the owners of every parcel of land within each hundred, what the yearly product of every man's land, of his stock on

* *Hall*, p. 18.

the lands, what foreigners resided in each hundred, the business they followed, and also what pensions were drawn thence for spiritual men." *

The clergy, upon petitioning the cardinal to that effect, were permitted to have bishops and abbots appointed as their commissioners, in order that temporal men should not be privy to their condition.

The raising of this loan, which Henry caused to be denominated a benevolence, excited serious murmurs. When the commissioners began to exercise their authority, which the common people, says Hall, called "practysinge the loane," universal acclamations were uttered against the cardinal, to whom every odious measure was attributed; while the king, who was considered as the automaton which is directed by a master mind, retained his usual popularity.

It is, indeed, remarkable, that this prince, exercising his regal power in a most irregular, arbitrary, and injudicious manner, always possessed a degree of popularity with the people, which many wiser and better governors have scarcely attained. In the result of this oppressive tax, for such it really was under an assumed name, Henry and Wolsey were, however, disappointed. After expressing his satisfaction on

* Note in *Rapin*, vol. vi, p. 188. 8vo.

finding the wealth of his people to be far greater than he had expected, Henry was constrained, from the dread of exciting disturbances, to levy the contribution with so much moderation, that it produced a much smaller sum than he required, and than he had anticipated. In this emergency, his honour pledged to embark in an unnecessary war, and his treasury scarcely adequate to liquidate the ordinary expences of government, Henry had recourse to a parliament, which he assembled at the monastery of Blackfriars,

April 5, 1523. in the church of which parliaments were occasionally held. Here, after mass, the king, with Wolsey and Warham at his feet, and all the peers attending, listened to a long oration delivered by Cuthbert Tonstall, Bishop of London, on the office of a king. The eminent divine who had now the honour of expatiating before Henry on the exercise of the regal authority, was the natural son of a gentleman of old family, and not, as it has been erroneously stated, the descendant of a barber. "He was," says Bishop Godwin, "a very rare and admirable man, with nothing wrong but his religion; a very good Grecian, well seen in the Hebrew tongue; a very eloquent rhetorician, a passing skilful mathematician; famous especially in arithmetic, whereof he wrote a work much esteemed; a great lawyer, in that faculty

he proceeded doctor; and a profound divine, as many of his works yet do testifie."* To this eulogium Sir Thomas More has added his testimony of praise, and has pronounced Tonstall to be inferior to none of his contemporaries either in the cultivation of his understanding, in the integrity of his principles, or in the sweetness of his manners. Moderate though steady in his religious opinions, Tonstall was fortunate enough to escape the dangers which assailed his brother churchmen during the life of Henry. In the succeeding reign he suffered imprisonment, and was deprived of his bishoprick, but was restored on the accession of Mary. In the time of Elizabeth, however, he was again forced to relinquish his bishoprick, and died at an advanced age.†

In the discourse which Tonstall delivered on the occasion in question, he insisted first, "on the necessity of judgment to a prince, according to the saying of David: '*Deus judicium tuum regi da,*'" &c. Secondly "on the propriety of learning being added to judgment, according to the same inspired writer, '*erudimini qui indicatis terram.*' "In conformity to which sayings God had sent to us a prince of great judgment, learning and experience; who forgot not to set

* *Godwin's Catalogue of Bishops*, p. 247.

† *Ibid.*

forward all things which might be profitable to his people, lest there might be laid to his charge that saying of Seneca — '*Es rex et non habe tempus esse rex?*'"

The considerations which, according to the discourse of Dr. Tonstall, had moved the king now to call a parliament, were chiefly that the common law might be redressed, and that new statutes might be enacted for the general benefit; but little notice was actually taken of these matters. In compliance with their instructions, the commons, on the following day, elected their speaker, and their choice fell on Sir Thomas More, then known to the public as a lecturer upon law in Furnival's Inn, and as a successful but not opulent practitioner at the bar, for he took no fees from "poor folks, widows, nor pupils." * As an author, More had already begun to distinguish himself as a man of an elevated and eccentric genius. Agreeably to the old custom, "he disabled himself," says Hall, "both in wit, learning, and discretion, to speak before the king, and brought in for his purpose how one Phormio desired Hanniball to come to his readynge, whiche thereunto assented, and when Hanniball was come he began to read *de re militari*, that is, of chivalrie; when Hanniball had perceived him, he called him arrogante

April 5, 1523.

* *Butler's Memoirs of Roman Cath.* vol. i. p. 64.

foole, because he would presume to teache him who was master of chivalrie, in the feates of warre. So the speaker sayd if he should speake before the kynge of learnynge and ordering of a common welth, and such other lyke, the kynge being so well learned and of suche prudence and experience might say to him as Hanniball sayd to Phormio. Wherefore he desired that they would chuse another speaker." To this address, the Cardinal of York replied by assuring Sir Thomas that the king well knew his wit, learning, and discretion, and that his Majesty was of opinion that the commons had chosen the most suitable speaker that could have been selected. After other discussions equally complimentary and unimportant, the business of the parliament proceeded. *

A convocation was called at the same time with the parliament, and for the same purpose, that of obtaining a subsidy. In his conduct on this occasion, Wolsey displayed so much arrogance and love of power, that we are surprised, not so much at his possessing these qualities, as at his indiscretion in manifesting them so openly. Warham, having convened his clergy at Canterbury, opened the assembly at St Paul's, on the 20th of April: the cardinal also summoned the clergy in his province at York, on the 22d of

* *Hall*, p. 653.

March, but prorogued them immediately to Westminster, whither he had either the indiscretion or audacity to summon the convocation of Canterbury.* This kind of legatine synod, irregular as it was, was probably assembled by Wolsey chiefly to shew his superiority to Warham, and to have the clergy more completely within his power; but this arrogant assumption was resisted, and the clergy of Canterbury, affirming that their powers could only be exercised in their own province, returned to Saint Paul's, and each convocation gave its supplies separately. The design of Wolsey being thus frustrated, he had recourse to a general assembly of the church in England, to deliberate, as he said, upon the "*Reformation of the clergy, both of seculars and regulars, and of other matters relating to it*";† a subject of greater importance than even the cardinal himself, in all probability, at that time, apprehended.

1523-24.

The recent proceedings of government had now occasioned universal discontent; and it was no great effort of prescience to prognosticate

* This convocation of the diocese of Westminster to Saint Paul's was entirely unprecedented; and it gave rise to the following ridiculous distich from Shelton:

"Great Paule lay doune thy sworde;
For Peter of Westminster hath shaven thy bearde."

Hall, 657.

† *Burnet*, vol. iii. p. 41.

that serious disturbances would follow measures so unpopular and inexpedient as those adopted by the king and Wolsey. The clergy, however, granted four shillings in the pound, but their example was followed by the laity with reluctance, and the subject was discussed with great vehemence in the commons, notwithstanding a long oration from Wolsey, who, magnifying the affronts and injuries received by the king from Francis, continued to demand a supply of money adequate to the exigences of the state. Among other arguments, the observations made by the cardinal upon the general increase of luxury, the addition to the customs, the sumptuous buildings, the profuse banquets, and costly apparel of the period, afford another instance of the manifest alteration of manners which must have taken place, since it could be thus publicly a subject of remark.* These reflections on the part of Wolsey gave great offence to his hearers, who were highly displeased that the cardinal should speak, almost in a tone of reprehension, of their encouraging those improvements in the arts of life, which appeared to abound at his own table, and in his own princely residence. It was argued, in reply, that the country, although rich in staple commodities, could not supply specie enough for the demand; an assertion

* *Hall*, p. 654.

which was borne out by commissioners appointed to investigate into the monied interest; but Wolsey, on the intreaty of these commissioners to persuade the king into an abatement of the demand, passionately exclaimed, that he "would rather have his tongue plucked out of his head with pincers, than move the king to take any less sum:" which reply they instantly carried to the parliament house, where, says Hall, "every day was reasoning, but nothing concluded." *

On this occasion a memorable scene occurred in the house of commons. Wolsey, fearful that the subsidy would not be granted, determined upon attending personally in the debate; a mode of proceeding not at all agreeable to the commons, among whom it was discussed whether they should receive the cardinal with a few of his lords, or with his whole retinue. But the members having recently received a reproof from Wolsey, for their indiscretion in mentioning occurrences within the house, in public assemblies, or in general conversation; their new speaker, More, counselled them to allow Wolsey to enter with all his pomp, "with his maces, his pillars, his pollaxes, his crosses and hat, and the great seal too," that if a similar fault were afterwards laid to the charge of the commons, they might affirm that the numerous

* *Hall*, p. 656.

attendants of the Cardinal had spread reports of their proceedings. The Cardinal accordingly made his appearance, and addressed the house in a pompous oration; but, to his surprise, no answer was returned to this harangue, and it was with some difficulty that he could even extort a reply from Mr. Speaker, who, falling on his knees, among other excuses, declared "that unless every one of the assembly would put into his head all their several wits, he alone was unmeet, in so weighty a matter, to make his grace answer." Wolsey did not forgive this evasion. On the following day he met More, in his gallery at Whitehall: "Would to God, Mr. More," said he, "that you had been at Rome when I made you speaker." "Your grace not offended, so would I," replied More, "for then should I have seen those holy places that I have so often and so much desired." After a few turns, in hopes of cooling the wrath of the cardinal, More began to talk of the gallery, and said, "I like this gallery of yours, my lord, better than that of Hampton Court." But Wolsey could not restrain his displeasure, and flung from him, being unable to make any reply, from the violence of his passion.*

Henry heard of these difficulties and delays with his usual impatience; and the following anecdote is related, which, though not suffi-

* *Life of Sir Thomas More, Eccl. Biog.* vol. ii. p. 77.

ciently substantiated to be wholly credited, proves with what despotism he was considered to govern, when such conduct could be ascribed to him. Sir Edward Montagu, speaker of the commons in 1524, a serjeant at law, and chief justice, the descendant of the antient Earls of Salisbury, and the ancestor of the present Dukes of Manchester, was supposed to have great influence in parliament. The king, it is said, sent for him, and laying his hand on the head of Montagu, who was kneeling: "Ho!" said he, "will they not let my bill pass? get my bill to pass by such a time to-morrow, or else by such a time thy head will be off." This threat, as it is stated, produced the desired effect; and by the appointed time, the wishes of the king were in part fulfilled.*

A member of parliament, whose name is not subscribed, writes thus to the Earl of Surrey, then in the north, concerning the measures in parliament at this time.†

"Pleasith your good lordship to understand, that sithence the beginning of parliament,

* This Sir Edw. Montagu was appointed one of Henry's sixteen executors. In 1532, he had the honour of entertaining the king and queen, and the whole court, at Ely House, for five days, with such magnificence that it wanted little of a coronation. See *Collins's Peerage*, vol. ii. p. 44.

† See *Strype's Mem.* vol. i. p. 76. from a letter in the British Museum.

there hath been the greatest and sorest hold in the Lower House, for the payment of two shillings in the pound, that was ever seen, I think, in any parliament. This matter hath been debated and beaten fifteen and sixteen days together. The highest necessity, alledged on the king's behalf, that was ever heard of; and, on the contrary, the highest poverty confessed as well by knights, esquires, gentlemen of every quarter, as by the commoners, citizens, and burgesses; there hath been such hold, that the house was like to have been dissevered. That is to say, the knights being of the king's council, the king's servants and gentlemen of the one party; which, in so long time were spoken with, and made to see, yea, it may fortune, contrary to their heart, will, and conscience."

The writer, after proceeding to state that a grant of two shillings in the pound from those who had twenty pounds a year and upwards, and one shilling from those who had between forty shillings and twenty pounds a year, (the largest grant ever made to a king before, and yet only half of the demanded contribution,) concludes with this observation. "I do tremble to see the end of all these high and new enterprizes; for oftentimes it hath been seen, that to a new enterprize there followeth a new maner, and

strange sequel. God, of his grace, send his grace unto such fashion that it may be for the best!" *

The parliament having made the grant stated above, on the 21st of May, adjourned to the 10th of June.

The arrival of Christian, King of Denmark, in England, took place this month.
1524. He had been driven from his own dominions, by his uncle, Frederick, Duke of Holstein, on account of his cruelty; and had taken refuge in Flanders, whence he now passed into England, with his consort, the sister of Charles the Fifth, and a train of forty persons, whose apparel spoke the ruined fortunes of their master. During a visit in this country of three weeks, Henry, whose hospitality was unrivalled by any prince of his time, entertained the Danish monarch with courtesy and splendour. On seeing the city watch, which has been before described, Christian was so struck with the number and equipments of this guard, that he exclaimed: "Would to God I had so many archers, pikes, and halberders as I saw this night; then, I trust, I would punish such as have wrongfully dispossessed me of my realm and country!" After receiving many gifts from the liberal hands of the English monarch, the northern refugees returned into Flanders. †

* *Strype's Mem.* vol. ii. p. 78. chap. 3.

† *Hall*, p. 657.

CHAP. XI.

Erection of the College of Physicians. — Previous state of Medical Art. — Linacre. — Physicians formed into a Body Corporate in 1523. *— Essential character of the Profession of Medicine at that Period. — Medical Learning. — The nobler designs which Wolsey had in view. — Suppression of the lesser Monasteries. — Condition of these establishments. — The alleged advantages of these institutions. — Their evils. — Difficulties encountered by Wolsey in their destruction. — Their Revenues applied to the Foundation of Colleges. — State of the English Universities. — Benefits conferred upon them at this Period. — Visit of Queen Katharine to Oxford. — Ipswich, Cardinal's College.* 1524.—1525.

IT is refreshing, during our progress through those pages in which the narrative of public negociations or of secret intrigues is submitted to our perusal, to divert our attention to those schemes for promoting general utility which originated in motives of a benevolent and liberal character; and it is in subjects of this nature that the biographer possesses an advantage over the historian, whose views are too extended, to allow him to discuss matters which, though merely of local interest, are yet curious and important.

To the early part of the reign of Henry, we

must look for the origin of most of those valuable institutions, upon account of which alone he deserves that fame which has been accorded to him, rather from circumstances than from merit. The later conduct of this monarch, beneficial as it was to this country in some respects, was prompted by motives for which the lover of justice can allow him no credit; and it was in his youth, before his mind was debased by the immoderate indulgence of passion, before his temper was soured by the protracted troubles of his divorce, and, above all, while he was under the inordinate, but efficacious influence of Wolsey, that we are to look for most of those actions upon which the genuine reputation of Henry the Eighth depends.

It must, at this period, have been consolatory to the people of England to have observed, that whilst Henry expended upon foreign wars, and lavished upon foreign friends, the resources of the nation, he devoted some portion of the public money to erect a college of physicians; and it is agreeable to all who entertain a favourable opinion of mankind, to remember, that while the ingenuity of Wolsey was exerted in cajolling his powerful but faithless coadjutors to raise him to the papacy, he gave the nobler qualities of his soul full scope in the reformation of monasteries, and in the foundation of colleges.

It has been reasonably conjectured that the prevalence of the sweating sickness first induced Henry to direct the attention of the legislature to the state of the medical art in this country. Although it has been allowed that physic, in the sixteenth century, was practised with a greater degree of liberality in this country than on the continent, yet, in the early part of this reign, it had been found necessary to frame an act, passed in 1511, the preamble to which was written by the celebrated Linacre *, forbidding "smiths, weavers, women, common artificers, and persons who know no letters," to practice medicine or chirurgery, in which they are stated to make "use of sorcery and witchcraft, and to apply such medicines as be very noxious, to the great infamy of the faculty, and the grievous hurt, damage, and destruction of many of the king's liege people." It was therefore enacted, "that no person who had not been previously examined by a dean of St. Paul's, or by the Bishop of London, assisted by a medical council, should be permitted to practise medicine within seven miles of London, under a penalty of six pounds a month;" a similar regulation was made, at the same time, for the rest of England. †

This beneficial statute was followed, in 1513,

* *Barrington on the Statutes*, p. 474.

† See Public Acts, 3d year of Henry the Eighth, Cap. xi.

by another, of which the faculty to this day experience the advantages, and which exempted the corporation of surgeons, at their own petition, from bearing arms, or serving in juries or parish offices *; and as, at that time, the number of regular surgeons in the metropolis amounted only to twelve, there was a far greater necessity for urging and for acceding to the request than at present.

These enactments were doubtless productive of an increased degree of respectability to the practitioners of medicine, although it was not until many years afterwards that the body of surgeons emancipated themselves from their incorporation with barbers. In the reign of Henry, this association was not regarded in the same light as at present; and the degradation consists, not from an alteration in the condition of the surgeon, but in that of the barber. Before the invention of perukes, barbers were not often employed in the low office of shaving, and their fees for that employment were considerable; every knight of the bath gave a sum of money at his inauguration to his barber, and an earl usually presented this important agent with 100*l.* on a similar occasion. † It was not, therefore, in the reign of Henry, so great a deterioration from the dignity of the surgeon to

* See Public Acts, fourth year of Henry the Eighth.

† *Barrington*, p. 496.

be in the same company with the members of that useful profession, as it would now be considered, consistently with our modern ideas upon the subject.

Before the foundation of the College of Physicians, medicine was, upon the whole, chiefly in the hands of the clergy, who were almost the only persons that could read the Latin works which treated upon the subject. As ecclesiastics seldom possessed the means of acquiring extensive knowledge on this point, as their chemical and pharmaceutical knowledge must have been imperfect, and as their practice was too limited to afford them the only substitute for science, experience, the temptation to have recourse to miracles was almost irresistible, in an age when faith was abundant. Bale, in his virulent little work, entitled "The Mysterye of Iniquitie disclosed," thus describes the practice which had been adopted by these clerical physicians: — "The priests," says he, "held forth the efficacy of masses; some were good for the poor, some for the pestilence, some were good for the head-ache, some for the ague, and some for the evil." * Thus was superstition called in to the aid of ignorance, a necessary connexion existing between those evils. "Relics," says Fosbrooke, in his British

* *Bale's Mysterie of Iniquitie*, p. 60. Printed in 1542.

Monachism, "were introduced into the Materia Medica; the hairs of a saint's beard dipped in holy water, were taken inwardly; a ring taken from the body of St. Remigius, and dipped in water, is said to have produced a drink very good in fevers, and in different diseases. Limbs, it seems, were as valuable as whole bodies, because the saint, knowing that he was not entire without the limb, would, of course, attend to that as well as to the rest of the body." *

While supposed miracles supplied the place of science, knowledge and philosophy were of little avail in securing the faith of the vulgar to the few who aspired to practise upon theoretic principles. But the general burst of intellect, from that darkness with which it was enveloped before the introduction of printing, was favourable, among its other benefits, to medicine; and the more rational part of the community, weary of delusion, began to place confidence in the effects of study and experience.

At such an æra, it was fortunate for the science of medicine, that the physician who chiefly attended upon the king personally, was a man no less qualified to understand the importance and the deficiencies of his own profession, than to advance its interests by his erudition, and to desire its improvement from the benevolence of his

* *Fosbrooke, Brit. Mon.* p. 15.

disposition. The office of physician both to Henry the Seventh, and to his son, since his accession, was filled, at this time, by Thomas Linacre, a person of whom it has been questioned, whether he was a better Latinist or a Grecian; a better grammarian or physician; a better scholar or man, in his moral deportment.* Descended from an antient family in the town of Derby, and educated at All Souls' College, Oxford, Linacre had also the advantage of studying at Bologna, under Angelo Politian, a celebrated scholar at that university, who was soon surpassed by his pupil in the purity of his Latin style. At Florence, Linacre received many proofs of regard and estimation from the renowned Lorenzo de Medicis; and he obtained the honour of a professorship in the university of Padua. After acquiring a perfect knowledge of the Greek language from Chalcondylas, a Constantipolitan refugee in Italy, Linacre returned home, to bestow upon his country the fruits of learning and of science, which he had reaped in a foreign land; and becoming a doctor of physic at Oxford, he undertook to read there a *shagling*, or extraordinary lecture on physic; and as he soon felt considerable interest in the progress of the medical art, he founded two public lectures at Merton College, Oxford, for the benefit of

* *Fuller's Worthies*, vol. i. p. 357.

that seminary of learning, in which medical students then abounded, and one for the same purpose at Cambridge. Nor were the labours of this great man confined to the recesses of an university library, or to the promotion of learning merely in academies. Besides his situation as physician at court, Linacre became Latin preceptor to Prince Arthur, to the Princess Katharine of Arragon, and to Princess Mary afterwards Queen of France and Duchess of Suffolk, for whose particular benefit he composed a book on the Latin Grammar.* Esteemed as the "hater of all fraudulent and indirect dealings," beloved, as the "faithful friend and the sincere philanthropist," the associate and friend of Erasmus, Melancthon, More, Grocyn, Colet, Latimer, Tonstall, Warham, and of other learned men, Linacre had yet some troubles to encounter from the envy and suspicion of inferior spirits. Having, in the preceding reign, among his other works, translated Proclus, it was insinuated by Bernard Andreas, also a tutor of Prince Arthur, that the entire merit of that translation was due to some individual, whose work had been assumed by Linacre as his own; and on this account, it has been supposed, began that dislike of Linacre which Henry the Seventh ever afterwards manifested towards him. In composition, the fastidi-

* *Wood's Atheniensis, Oxoniæ,* art. *Linacre.*

ousness of Linacre was so extreme, that Erasmus, his friend, and pupil in the Greek language, was obliged to urge him, and often in vain, to send the result of his labours to the press.* In the Translations of Galen's Tracts, which Linacre published for the use of medical students, Galen is said by Dr. Fuller "to speak better Latin than he did Greek in the original †;" and the knowledge of the Greek language which Linacre possessed procured him the honour of instructing some of the greatest men of the day; and, among others, of claiming Sir Thomas More as his pupil.

In discussing the opinions and merits of any celebrated man at this æra, it is natural to inquire what were his religious tenets? The reproach of scepticism, which is often unjustly affixed to the character of those of the same profession with Linacre, cannot, with any probability, be ascribed to this great man, although he has met with censure from the uncharitable pen of the famous Bale, for a sentiment which he uttered in his later years. Having taken orders a short time before his death, and obtained the chantorship of York as his preferment ‡, Linacre is said, upon the authority of Sir John Clerke, one of

* *Knight's Life of Erasmus*, p. 24.
† *Fuller's Worthies*, vol. i. p. 259.
‡ *Knight's Erasmus*, p. 24.

his learned contemporaries, to have commenced the study of the New Testament; and, upon perusing those inimitable productions, the fifth, sixth, and seventh chapters of Saint Matthew's Gospel, this venerable scholar was so much struck with the purity of its injunctions, contrasted with the imperfection of human obedience, that he threw the book from him, exclaiming, "Either this is not the Gospel, or we are not Christians!" * An exclamation which marked nicety of apprehension, and delicacy of conscience, rather than any intention to disparage those sublime portions of holy writ.

Such was the character of the man, by whose wisdom and exertion the interests of medicine were essentially promoted. He was fortunate in living at a time when the progress of science was not retarded by the narrow principles of the prime minister, or by the parsimony of the reigning monarch. It was in 1518 that Henry, upon the instigation of Wolsey, commenced the institution of a college of physicians, which was intended as a point of union for the students of medicine at the two English universities; but the physicians of London did not become a body corporate until 1523, when they were endowed with various privileges calculated to give dignity and power to the establishment. It was

* *Fuller's Worthies.*

expressly stated in the act, that no person should be suffered to practise medicine, "but such as be sad, discreet, groundly-learned, and deeply studied in physick." * Celibacy, in modern times considered as an objection to the professor of medicine, was now no longer adhered to by physicians, although it had been esteemed, until the year 1451, a suitable condition, not only for the spiritual guardian to whose guidance the care of souls was entrusted, but for the grave physician in whose wisdom and knowledge the security of the bodily health was confided.†

From the proceedings which have been detailed, the rise of the medical art in this country may be dated; and not only was the number of irregular practitioners reduced, but the profession rendered extremely lucrative. "The most effectual remedy against poverty," says Erasmus, "is the art of medicine, which of all others is the most removed from mendicity:" and it appears that a physician of the king must have been a man of some wealth and importance, when he could afford to give his family so distinguished a tutor as Erasmus, as in the case of Dr. John Baptista, who was first physician to Henry the Eighth, and whose two sons were placed for some time under the instruction

* See Acts, 15th Henry the Eighth, cap. v.

† *Fosbrooke.*

of that celebrated Belgian. It is melancholy to reflect that Linacre scarcely lived to witness the benefits of which he was the principal instrument. The building for the college of physicians was erected about the year 1522 or 1523, in Knight Rider's Street, whence it was afterwards removed to Amen Corner, and at a much later period to the edifice in Warwick Lane, which was designed by Sir Christopher Wren.* In 1524 Linacre breathed his last, and was buried in Saint Paul's cathedral, where a stately monument was raised to his memory by Dr. John Key, or, according to the pedantic Latinization then in vogue, Caius; the historian and benefactor of Cambridge, and physician to Queen Mary.† The benevolent designs of Linacre were prosecuted in some degree by Wolsey, who founded a lecture of medicine at Corpus Christi college, Oxford, in 1522, and appointed Thomas Musgrave, fellow of Merton college, the first reader, an office which he was allowed from his great merit to undertake, though contrary to the rules of the university. This was the revival of those ancient medical schools, which appear from the statutes to have been established at Oxford.‡ Henry, after-

* It has lately, 1825, been removed to Pall Mall east.

† *Fuller's Worthies*, vol. i. p. 359.

‡ *Wood's History of Oxford*, vol. i. p. 2.

wards, endowed a medical professorship at Cambridge, and affixed to it a salary of forty pounds per annum.*

The improvements in medicine, at this period, were rapid and important, but much yet remained to be done. Medical learning was still at a low ebb, and not until the year 1547 was the pen of any of its professors exerted in an original work upon the subject. The Breviarie of Health, written by Andrewe Borde, a court physician and poet, is the first printed book extant upon medicine; but a very old manuscript Breviarie of Practice is still preserved among the Harleian manuscripts.

The immediate utility arising from the measures which have been detailed cannot be disputed. But while Wolsey favoured the improvement of the sciences, he had objects of much greater importance at heart. He saw, with regret, that the ignorance of the clergy became every day more obvious, when compared with the superior learning of the reformers, who well knew what important weapons the power of reasoning and the possession of knowledge prove in the field of disputation. While the advocates of the old doctrines remained in a state of voluntary darkness, the promoters of the new sect sedulously sought those means of superiority

* *Dyer's Hist. of Cambridge*, vol. i. p. 84.

which have seldom proved fruitless; and adding the influence of moral worth to erudition and philosophy, presented in their lives an evident contrast to the dissolute manners, the superficial information, and the prejudice displayed by the majority of the Catholic divines.

Wolsey, although devotedly attached to the interests of his own church, of which he hoped one day to become the head, was not blind to its defects, which he justly considered as among the real causes of those dangers with which it was assailed; and perceiving that the disease was internal, and that radical means must be adopted to extirpate the insidious corruption, he "determined," says Lord Herbert, "to set up learning against learning," as the only means of preserving an equality with the protestant party. With this view the Cardinal now directed the attention of his powerful and energetic mind to that momentous subject, the education of youth.

Hitherto, with few exceptions besides the two great schools of Eton and Winchester, and the recent institution by Dr. Colet, the arduous office of instruction had devolved either upon monks and nuns, or on the society of parish clerks, before specified as the heroes of the stage, and who united to the profession of the histrionic art, the accomplishments of singing and of read-

ing.* To the monasteries chiefly was society indebted, also, for the greater portion of the learning which it possessed during the early and middle ages. In most of the convents, whether male or female, the common rudiments of knowledge were taught gratuitously; and by the constitutions of the friars, each prior of a monastery was obliged to select a diligent master, in order to instruct the novices, who came thither either for education, or for initiation into the monastic profession.† The master was to teach the children to be "humble in heart and body;" and especially to inculcate upon them this text, "Learn of me, who am meek and lowly of heart;" he was to instruct them how to receive discipline, and not to speak of absent blessings; he was also to ground his young pupils in grammar, logic, and philosophy; to direct them how to be constantly reading, or learning by heart; and how to conduct themselves in the minor observances of their rule; and besides these instructions, music, both in the science and the practice, accounts, writing, turning, gilding, painting, sculpture, and almost every useful

* The first public institution in Europe for promoting any branch of polite literature was founded in 1501, at Vienna, by the Emperor Maximilian, who being himself a dabbler in verse, endowed, in the University of Vienna, a college of poetry. *Warton, Hist. E. Poet.* vol. ii. p. 415.

† *Fosbrooke's British Monachism*, p. 193.

pursuit, were inculcated on those who had a turn for these occupations, or who were not destined to any particular and secular pursuits. The female novices were attended with equal assiduity by a mistress, who besides superintending the general conduct of her young charges, was expected to instruct them in the service and the rule, and to those who were destined to take the veil, supernumerary accomplishments were imparted. A well-tutored novice was able to copy works upon parchment, to read both French and Latin, to excel in needle work, even to transmit the narratives of history to canvass, to dress wounds, to administer medicines with efficacy, to dance, to make confectionary, to draw, to play upon musical instruments, to cast accounts, to which an earlier attention was given by them than by the boys, to be skilled in hawking and horsemanship, and even in tumbling and playing, of which itinerant professors were sometimes introduced into the convents. "Music, which," as Fuller remarks, "sang its own dirge at time of the dissolution," was cultivated with great care in these seminaries; in many convents there was a song-school erected within the church, and a master appropriated to teach the boys the use of the organ, and of the voice; a practice the more essential, as not only were vocal and instrumental performers required for the daily and nightly

services, but in the family of every bishop, and of many of the nobility, there were choirs of singing boys, thus previously tutored in monastic establishments.*

The greatest possible discipline was enforced in these conventual schools, and lessons of subordination and of self-denial were inculcated by precept, if not by example; for the monks, although lax in their own morals and habits, yet were rigid in requiring obedience from the novices.† When the abuses of monastic institutions became more obvious, it is probable that the instructions of their members ceased to possess the public confidence. As the progress of learning advanced, it may possibly have become apparent to the heads of families, that the minute and tedious observances required by the monastic teachers, tended to form a speaking automaton, rather than a well-bred student, and threw a restraint upon the cheerfulness, and consequently upon the energy of youth; and as philosophy became better understood, it was doubtless perceived that even the scholastic acquirements of the novices were tinctured with prejudice and confused with jargon. There was, however, for the highest classes, a middle course to be pursued, between the assiduous, but often injurious instructions of the monks, and the entrance

* *Fosbrooke*, p. 368. † *Fosbrooke.*

into public schools. The abbots, many of them learned, and patrons of literature, had frequent opportunities of observing the necessity and advantages of erudition, of which their own share occasionally procured them the charge of embassies, and other important employments. As they had often no other mode of disposing of the superfluities of their revenues, it became a practice among the heads of the larger convents, especially among those who were honoured with the mitre, to receive into their private lodges the sons of the principal families in the neighbourhood, for the purposes of education. About the year 1450, Thomas Bromele, abbot of the mitred monastery of Hyde, near Winchester, boarded within his own abbatical house, in that monastery, eight young gentlemen, who were placed there for the sake of literary instruction, and who dined at the abbot's table. The apartments of the abbot of Glastonbury resembled, we are told, a kind of well disciplined court, where the sons of noblemen and of the gentry were sent for virtuous education; and Richard Whiting, the last abbot of Glastonbury, who was cruelly executed by Henry the Eighth, brought up nearly three hundred ingenious youths, besides many others whom he liberally supported at the universities. *

* *Warton*, vol. ii. 445.

It was in the beginning of the sixteenth century that the monastic seminaries began to decline in public estimation, and that the great schools of Winchester and of Eton obtained a larger share of popularity than they had hitherto possessed. Assisted by the art of printing, which afforded a facility to such institutions, numerous grammar schools were now established, and, from the year 1503, until the æra of the Reformation, more were founded than had been the case during the space of the three previous centuries.* Of these, many have fallen into disuse and oblivion; but the noble endowment of Saint Paul's school still remains, affording an interesting memorial of the wisdom and liberality which caused its origin, and which guided the founder in its regulations.

In framing the plan of this establishment, it was the good fortune of Dr. John Colet to secure the patronage of Wolsey, the counsels of Erasmus, and the instructions of Lillye. In this academy, the first which was instituted in England by a private individual, a hundred and fifty-three boys were admitted; the master, contrary to custom, was directed to be a married man, as well as the trustees, who were chosen from the Company of Mercers, to which Sir Henry Colet, the father of the dean, had

* *Knight's Life of Colet*, p. 200.

belonged. It appeared surprising to the contemporaries of Colet, that he should not have vested the future management of his infant institution in the dean and canons of St. Paul; but on being interrogated on this point, he replied, that having observed "a greater degree of probity in the citizens of London than in any other class of men, he had placed his school under their direction."* It is possible that the enlightened mind of Colet may have anticipated the probability of that revolution in the system of the hierarchy, which might have endangered his charitable funds: the wisdom of his preference has been eminently displayed in the result.

The erection of Saint Paul's school has been assigned by Stowe, in his Survey of London, to the year 1509.† It is dedicated to the child Jesus, of whom a figure is placed in the principal school-room; and the doctrines of Christianity are included as an important part of the instructions which the scholars are entitled by the rules of the founder to receive. To preside over the upper class of students, Colet appointed William Lillye, a man whose thirst for knowledge had induced him to travel to Italy, Rhodes, and Jerusalem, and who having acquired an acquaintance with the Greek language at Rhodes, became on his return the earliest English teacher

* *Knight's Life of Colet.* † It was rebuilt in 1825.

of the Latin and Greek tongues, in any public school in England.* It was also a circumstance of even greater moment to Colet, who considered the formation of a pure and virtuous mind as the chief object of education, that the manners of Lillye were correct and simple, and that his character was unsullied by dissolute propensities. For the benefit of Saint Paul's school, Lillye composed his celebrated grammar, which received the corrections of Erasmus, and which has since undergone many alterations and improvements.† Colet also employed himself in drawing up the rudiments of grammar, together with a summary of the Christian religion, a book which obtained the name of "Paul's Accidents;" and the "Institution of a Christian Man," a work which had been recently published in Latin by the authority of Henry, was translated for the use of this school by Erasmus, who also composed an excellent oration "in praise of the child Jesus," to be spoken by one of the scholars upon a solemn visitation of the school. Of this latter composition, a recent biographer of Erasmus has remarked, that if he had "written nothing else, it would have entitled him to immortality."‡

* *Butler's Erasmus*, p. 120. note.
† *Fuller's Worthies*, vol. i. p. 110.
‡ *Butler's Erasmus*.

The liberal and benevolent designs of Colet were not regarded by all his brother churchmen with entire approbation; and he was severely censured, at the foundation of his school, by one of the bishops, for admitting into his system of instruction the study of the Latin poets; the institution was even termed a house of pagan idolatry. Fortunately for the interests of literature, Wolsey was of a far different temper to this prelate. Although not deeply versed in classical learning, he had tasted sufficiently of its beauties to estimate its excellencies; and accustomed to the society of Erasmus, Pace, Tonstall, Colet, and of other eminent men, Wolsey could not be blind to the effects of classical literature in forming the tastes, and in elevating the ideas of these great men. He manifested his approbation of the revival of the Latin classics by attending, as a spectator, the representation of a Latin tragedy of Dido, from Virgil, written for the boys of Saint Paul's school by the grammarian Ryghtwise *: and, in a composition which he afterwards published, addressed to all the schoolmasters in England, the Cardinal strongly enjoined those who were entrusted with the office of instruction to introduce the classics into their plan of tuition.† In imitation of the

* *Warton*, vol. ii. p. 434.

† *Strype's Eccl. Mem.* vol. i. p. 193.

example which had been afforded him by Colet, Wolsey determined to establish a school on a similar scale to that of St. Paul's, at his native town of Ipswich; but previous to the execution of this scheme, a more extensive field of improvement was opened to his view; and Wolsey, both from the munificence of his disposition, and his natural penetration, was eminently calculated to avail himself, with the greatest advantage, of any opportunities which might occur of benefiting the interests of knowledge.

In conjunction with many reflective and unprejudiced persons, Wolsey had long observed with regret the increasing prevalence and corruptions of the monastic orders. Useful, if not essential in the darker ages of the world, the necessity for conventual establishments had ceased with those persecutions which had formerly endangered the votaries of Christianity, and on account of which they had been originally adopted. The evils resulting from such institutions cannot but be apparent to those who consider to what an artificial condition they reduce a considerable portion of society; a state, neither agreeable to the dictates of reason, nor authorized by scripture; yet these receptacles, which had attained their highest degree of prosperity in the beginning of the sixteenth century, must

not be regarded merely as the repositories of vice and ignorance; and the benefits which they afforded in times of turbulence and of anarchy, were accompanied by other advantages almost equally important and extensive.

Besides the maintenance of religious ceremonies, and the education of youth, we are indebted to the leisure and security which the shelter of a monastery usually afforded to its inmates, for the preservation of history and of literature. The title deeds of ancient families were frequently sent to convents as the most secure place of deposit; a considerable number of valuable rolls were preserved in the priories of Warwick and Kenilworth, until taken thence by Henry the Third; and the learned Selden has derived his principal evidences of the dominion of the narrow seas from monastic records.* The transcription of manuscripts constituted one of the chief occupations of the monks, who were obliged to pass a considerable portion of the day in the labours of the pen. In every monastery there was a scriptorium or writing room, in which the monks or nuns were employed in copying works; and with so much accuracy were these tasks usually performed, that the diligent author of British Monachism declares, that he has scarcely, in the course of his researches, met with a single

* *Tanner's Notitia*, by *Nasmyth. Preface*, p. 30, Note.

instance of bad writing except in one manuscript copied by a nun.* To each class of devotees were assigned occupations suitable to their powers. The *Antiquarii*, a body of industrious and learned monks, repaired and rendered intelligible such books as had become obsolete from age or dilapidation; those who excelled as painters, and ingenious nuns, were employed in illuminating these precious volumes, the result of so much labour; while the novices were occupied in writing the letters and ordinary documents of the convent.† It is to be regretted that the pages of general history rarely engaged the attention of these busy recluses; and that historical chronicles were seldom transcribed, unless when intended as presents. Where original composition formed a part of the monastic avocations, the narrowness of those views which a monk was enabled to form of society in general, the interests of his order, and the mixture of the affairs of the respective abbeys with more important transactions, have tended to lessen the value of such productions.

Besides these general advantages, monastic institutions in this country were attended with some local benefits, which merit insertion, although, rather because they have been insisted upon by other writers, than from a conviction

* *Fosbrooke*, p. 349. † *Ibid.*

of the ultimate good which they produced. They are said to have been of utility to the crown, by fines which they paid for the confirmation of their liberties; by the profits received by government upon the confirmation of an abbot in his election; and lastly, by pensions which it was customary for some of the principal convents to settle upon several of the king's servants who were in orders, until they had obtained preferments.* The monasteries were serviceable, also, in some respects, to the places near which they were situated, which they freed from the forest laws, and for which they usually obtained grants for holding fairs or markets.† The abbots were good landlords, as they let their lands at low rates, scarcely requiring more than a nominal rent to distinguish the tenant from the landlord; on this account, as likewise for the freedom from taxes, a long rent of monastic lands was frequently considered more advantageous than the tenure of a freehold.‡ These circumstances, undoubtedly, contributed to render the conventual institutions popular, especially among the agricultural part of the community; and acted as a counterpoise in the opinion of many, to the effects of that licentious and avaricious conduct with which the monks were generally reproached.

* *Taner's Notia,* pref. p. 21. † *Ibid.*

‡ *Fuller's Church Hist.* p. 298.

But perhaps that feature of monachism which most ensured the favour of the people, was the constant hospitality maintained at these monasteries, and which extended its invitations to every class of society, from the nobleman to the beggar. In every monastery of importance, a large room or guest-hall, surrounded with sleeping apartments, was appropriated for the reception of travellers, who were allowed to remain two days and two nights as visitors, but were expected, if they continued after that time, and were in health, to conform to the rule of the house.* In the reign of Henry the Eighth, inns were not frequent, and where they did exist they presented a scene of dirt and wretchedness which was scarcely tolerable even in those days of comparative indifference to cleanliness. Erasmus, who had a national susceptibility on this point, has spoken, very forcibly, on the miseries of an English inn at that period. It was, therefore, a most acceptable resource to travellers of all ranks, to enter within the secure and commodious precincts of a monastery, where they were sure of good fare, and a comfortable lodging. Even the nobility, when on their journies, usually dined at one religious house, and supped at another; and tradition has supplied us with an anecdote by which it appears, that royal

* *Fosbrooke*, p. 331.

visitors were not unknown in some of these institutions. The narrative is thus given by Fuller: "King Henry the Eighth, as he was hunting in Windsor Forest, either casually lost, or (more probable) wilfully losing himself, struck down about dinner time to the Abbey of Readinge. Where, disguising himself, (much for delight, more for discovery, to see unseen,) he was invited to the abbot's table, and passed for one of the king's guard, a place to which the proportion of his person might justly entitle him. A sir-loyne of beef was set before him, (so knighted, saith tradition, by this King Henry,) on which the king laid on lustily, not disgracing one of that place, for whom he was mistaken. 'Well fare thy heart,' quoth the abbot; 'and here in a cup of sack I remember the health of the king your master; I would give an hundred pounds on the condition I could feed so heartily on beef as you doe. Alas! my weake and squeazie stomach can hardly digest the wing of a small rabbet or chicken.' The king pleasantly pledged him, and heartily thanking him for his good cheer, after dinner departed, as undiscovered as he came thither. Some weeks after, the abbot was sent for by a pursevant, brought up to London, clapped in the Tower, kept close prisoner, and fed for a short time on bread and water. Yet not so empty his body of food, as his mind was filled

with fears, creating many suspitions to himself, when, and how he had incurred the king's displeasure. At last, a sir-loyne was set before him, on which the abbot fed as the farmer of his grange, and verified the proverb, that 'two hungry meals makes the third a glutton.' In springs King Henry out of a private lobbie, where he had placed himself, the invisible spectator of the abbot's behaviour; 'My lord,' quoth the king, 'presently deposit your hundred pounds in gold, or else no going hence all the daies of your life. I have been your physician to cure you of your squeazie stomack, and here, as I deserve, I demand my fee for the same.' The abbot down with his dust, and glad he had escaped so, returned to Readinge; as somewhat lighter in his purse, so much more merrier in heart than when he came thence."

The convenience which was afforded by monasteries to many great families, in providing for the daughters and younger sons, has also been stated as among the reasons on account of which their continuance was tolerated. By this accommodation the nobility were exempted from the necessity of oppressing their tenants with heavy rents, or of distraining them for payment; and were enabled to add to the splendour of a court, or to supply the sovereign with a contribution, when exigency required. The life of a

monk or a nun in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries was considered honourable, before the vices of the monastic orders were exposed. The abbot of a large monastery occupied an elevated place in society, and possessed great influence. The suit and service done at an abbot's court gave him great power; the constant hospitality kept up at his table brought him a number of retainers, and the civil and ecclesiastical places, frequently within his gift, afforded him many opportunities of serving his friends. It was therefore a matter of policy in powerful families to place their children in these seats of honour *, by many of which they sat as lords in parliament, and whence they were occasionally chosen for their superior attainments to be sent as ambassadors into foreign countries. Most of the larger monasteries were governed, therefore, by men of ancient descent, for family interest carried the day in their election, although every monk in chapter had a voice.† The women, whose misfortune, as it may be deemed, it was to belong to a poor but proud ancestry, were gladly received into nunneries without any dowry, as the religious houses were thankful, by that means, to secure the interests of the parents and brothers of the poor maidens, at parliament and at court.‡ Thus were they pro-

* *West's Antiquities of Furness Abbey.* p. 83. † Ibid.
‡ *Fuller*, p. 296.

vided with a maintenance, especially, as Fuller remarks, " if they were superanuated, not over-handsome, melancholy, et cetera :" and here, as he further observes, " the high-born nun might live in all outward happinesse, wanting nothing, except (perhaps) it were an husband." In enumerating this cruel practice of sacrificing the happiness of the child to the interests of the parent, as among the advantages of monachism, the historian seems to forget the total destruction of individual happiness, the waste of faculties unemployed, and wretchedness of monastic thraldom, however sanctioned by the customs, or dignified by the approbation of the world. It is sufficient, in regard to this part of the subject, to state, that but few persons, comparatively, were found within the monasteries, at the time of dissolution, who were not heartily weary of their vows, and rejoiced at their release.

The local and general evils of which the contemners of monastic institutions complained, were more than sufficient to counterbalance the advantages which have been enumerated as attending that system. In the first place, the commerce of this country had been materially injured by the monks, who, under pretence of abstraction from general intercourse, usually managed to monopolize all the trade of a district, and to confine it to their own precincts. They not only rented

and stocked farms, but kept even tan-houses and brewhouses in their own hands, managed by their own dependants; and as they had bark from their own woods, hides from the cattle of their own breeding and killing; and as they were generally well furnished with money to buy their materials from the best hand, they could allow a long credit, and could easily supersede in public estimation the poor manufacturer with a small capital.* That Henry the Eighth and Wolsey were fully sensible of the mischief produced by this monopoly on the part of the monks appears evident, from an act passed in the twenty-first year of this king's reign, forbidding any spiritual person either to hold farms, to buy corn or other merchandize with an intent to sell it again, to keep tan-houses or brewhouses, or to raise more of any article than what might be essential for the consumption of the religious houses to which they might happen to belong.†

The extreme prevalence of the monastic orders diminished the authority of parish priests, whose exhortations to virtue were considered of little value when compared with the host of supplication which might readily be obtained from a convent. In the heighth of conventual influence there was, therefore, little incentive to individual exertion among the parochial ministers of religion.

* *Fuller.* † *Acts.*

The execution of the law was impeded, and sometimes entirely frustrated, by the sanctuaries afforded to offenders in every religious house. Before the reign of Henry the Eighth, who passed an act regulating these abuses, every churchyard, and even the house of the vicar or curate, if within consecrated ground, was a sanctuary, except in cases of escape from prison, when the protection of the church was not allowed to prevail *, and in some retreats of this nature, meat, drink, and lodging were afforded them for more than a month. † Thus, protection against temporal power being afforded, and pardon from heavenly vengeance promised by absolutions, it is not a matter of surprize, that there were few who had not, in some point, sinned against the common law; that in the early part of this reign, murder and other heinous offences were frequent in an appalling degree.

But among the most serious abuses of the monastic system was the propagation of imposture. The ingenuity of the various orders was employed in exalting their several importance by the performance of pretended miracles; and, by this means, they not only gave to the vulgar a source of false dependance, but prevented the exercise of skill, and destroyed the stimulus to

* *Weaver's Funeral Monuments*, p. 182. † *Fuller.*

mental exertion. Miraculous cures were offered, which not only failed, except where the imagination was principally affected, but which were often the means of extorting large sums of money from the unfortunate dupes who resorted to these measures for relief. At St. Nuns' Pool, in Cornwall, insane persons were professedly recovered by being plunged in the water in the following manner. The well was enclosed with a square wall, and it might be filled to any depth, at pleasure; the patient was seated upon the wall, with his back towards the pool; and was pushed thence, by a sudden blow on the breast, into the water, where a stout man, placed for the purpose, tossed him about in the bath, until the maniac, overcome by the shock, and exhausted with the exertion, became tranquil. He was afterwards taken to the church, and praises offered to St. Nun for his recovery, which was seldom to be justly considered as such, being rather a temporary abatement of his fury from the shock, than a permanent amendment. This is one instance among many similar impositions equally censurable: and the sources of delusion were various.

Ventriloquism was also frequently an engine of imposture; and images were heard to utter oracular sentences, which were eagerly received by the deluded multitude. At Boxley, in Kent, a rood was made which moved the eyes and lips,

which, in 1538, was shewn to the people by the Bishop of Rochester, at St. Paul's Cross, and there, says Fuller, "broken in pieces, the people laughing at that which they adored an hour before." At Hailes Abbey, in Gloucestershire, the blood of a duck was ingeniously contrived to represent the blood of our Saviour, which, when sufficient offerings were given, was manifested to the votary. Nor were these the only kinds of imposition practised and credited; the monks were fortune-tellers, prophets, and astrologers, whose predictions sunk deeply into the minds, not only of the ignorant and simple, but of those whose means of superior information might have guarded them from errors of so dangerous a tendency.

But that which called most loudly for the reformation of all the monasteries, and the dissolution of some of the most notorious among these nurseries of vice, was the scandalous mockery and abuse of religion, exhibited in these institutions, by open profligacy and debauchery. The lesser abbeys were, in particular, infested with the contamination of the grossest vices that can be imagined, and which cannot be described.

It is some consolation, on contemplating the revolting picture which the annals of the day present, disclosing the spectacle of human nature

in the lowest state of degradation, to reflect that, in some of these debased societies, there were found individuals who had joined them from conscientious motives; and that in several instances entire convents were proved to be generally unexceptionable in moral conduct, exact in the observance of their rule, and in charitable and religious duties.

In whatever light the proceedings which were now commenced against the conventual 1525. bodies may be viewed, the obloquy or the merit of their destruction is not wholly referable to Henry the Eighth, or to his minister. The excesses of luxury and of crime, into which the members of sundry of these establishments had been, at various times, betrayed, had not escaped the judicious corrections of several of our kings. As early as the reign of Edward the Confessor, the great patron of the monastic system, the nunnery of Berkeley had been dissolved, and its revenues bestowed upon Earl Godwin; who had, by an artifice, detected the licentiousness which prevailed within its walls.

In the twelfth year of Henry the Fourth, during the sitting of the lay parliament, it was ascertained both by lords and commons, that the possessions of abbots and priors would maintain 150 earls, 1500 knights, 6200 esquires, and

100 hospitals, more than at that time existed: and although Henry the Fourth, from policy, abstained from carrying the resolutions of parliament into effect, yet, as Fuller observes, the "axe once laid to the root of the tree of abbeys, although the 'bark' was scarcely injured by the 'stroke,' yet bare attempts in such matters are important, as putting into people's heads a feasibility of the project formerly conceived altogether impossible." *

In the reign of Henry the Fifth, another attack upon the undue wealth acquired by monasteries, had been skilfully evaded by Chichely, then Archbishop of Canterbury, who diverted the king's mind by proposing an expedition into France.† The dissolution of alien monasteries, however, effected by the same monarch, paved the way for a more general destruction; for although composed of individuals whose foreign birth and connections rendered them indifferent, if not adverse to the interests of the country at large, yet, the affinity between all religious institutions constitutes a chain, one link of which being broken, the annihilation of the rest is accelerated.

The possibility of the total destruction of the monastic orders, although not familiar to the people, had yet been contemplated by several

* *Fuller's C. H.* VI. B. p. 301. † *Fuller.*

of the most eminent divines, as an event at no great distance from the period in question. In the reign of Henry the Seventh, the Abbot of Wellow, in Lincolnshire, used to prophesy that the monks and their religion would not long continue; repeating, as a corroboration of this opinion, the words of our Saviour: "every planting, which our heavenly father hath not planted, shall be rooted up." It was remarked, by the superstitious, as a proof that no peculiar favour of God was manifested to these institutions, that there was scarcely an abbey of importance in England, that had not, at some time or another, been burned by lightning, and even twice rebuilded. The orthodox and zealous Richard Fox, Bishop of Winchester, was dissuaded from the intention which he had formed, of founding a monastery, by Hugh Oldham, Bishop of Exeter, who, assuring him "that such convents possessed more than they would long enjoy," advised him rather to bestow his liberality in endowing a college; to which suggestion the University of Oxford owes Corpus Christi College, founded by Fox, and assisted by many donations from Oldham.*

Wolsey, encouraged by the manifest confidence and favour of Clement the
1524. Seventh, and endowed by that pontiff with the legatine authority for the term

* *Fuller.*

of his life, at one time even meditated to commence the suppression of the monasteries, by virtue of his own commission, by which he enjoyed almost a degree of papal power in this country; but he was afterwards induced to accede to the counsels of some advisers, who recommended him not to proceed in the matter without obtaining a pontifical bull. The reasons presumed by Lord Herbert * to have been suggested by the Cardinal to the pope, in his second application for this instrument from his Holiness, refer wholly to the revival of learning, which was doubtless a much more material point with Wolsey than the moral reformation of the monastic orders; for had the depravity of the clergy been regarded by this great minister as only the parent of those serious evils which he lamented in the church, he would probably have sought, both by example and by precept to the churchmen in his own dioceses, to have contributed, in a minor degree, to the improvement of that corrupt body. The motives which are said to have influenced the king in granting to Wolsey the charge of superintending the suppressions, have been ascribed by the same historian, both to a regard for the interests of learning, and to the reduced condition of his own treasury, which might, at some future time, be considerably benefited by such seizures as the valuable monastic lands and

* *Lord Herbert*, p. 147.

goods afforded. It is, however, more than probable, that the contemplation of those profits did not, at this period of Henry's life, enter into his calculations, but were induced by the subsequent suggestions of his ministers. The specific reasons assigned for these measures, were the erection of new colleges at Oxford and elsewhere.

Although armed with the authority of the pope, Wolsey found his task by no means free from obloquy and difficulties. In April, 1524, the monastery of St. Frideswide in Oxford, in the diocese of Lincoln, was suppressed, and its revenues made over to the Cardinal, by letters patent from the king. The pope * at the same time gave permission for the abolition of forty smaller monasteries. For the dissolution of these, two bulls were procured from the pontiff, the first in April, 1524, the second in March, 1525. In the letters patent, the king passed great eulogiums upon the Cardinal, and declared that the whole burden of the government had been devolved upon him for some years †; yet, soon afterwards, we find the monarch reproving his minister for some indiscretion in the mode of receiving, or of enforcing the surrenders of these houses. "As touching the help of religious houses to the building of your

* *Collier*, vol. ii. p. 19. † *Wood's Hist. Oxford.*

college," says the king, "I would it were more, so be it lawfully, for my intent is none but that it should so appear to all the world, and the occasion of all their mumbling might be secluded and put away, for surely there is great murmuring at it through all the realm, both good and bad. They say not that all that is ill gotten is bestowed on the college, but that the college is the cloke of all mischiefs. This grieveth me I assure you, to hear it spoken of him which I so entirely love, wherefore I thought I could do no less than thus friendly admonish you."*

Wolsey, who little understood or regarded the most expedient method of rendering any measure popular, employed, as an agent to receive the surrenders of the convents, his chaplain, John Aleyn, a man whose demeanour exceeded in arrogance the deportment of his master; and who, entering the places of his visitation with a procession similar to that of the legate, extorted such exorbitant sums from religious houses, and exercised his power with so little moderation, that a resisting and complaining spirit ran through the country. At the monastery of Beggam, in Essex, an establishment much esteemed by the lower classes of people, a disguised band, armed, and wearing visors, replaced the canons, and promised their assistance on the ringing of the abbey

* *Wood*, vol. iii. p. 417. Diss. G. Edited by Gutch.

bells; but the canons, on being summoned before the council, revealed the authors of this plot, who were severely punished. Nevertheless, the odium attending those who were employed in the abolition of monasteries long prevailed, especially among the indigent part of the community, who, before the institution of poors' rates, looked to the monasteries as to their natural resources in illness or extreme distress. Those who had rented abbatical lands were more especially sufferers from this visitation; for, in return for the cattle and other provisions with which they supplied their landlords, they received more than an equivalent in beer and ale, in plentiful donations of coarse wheaten bread, in manure from the ample stables of the monasteries for the improvement of the farms, which were usually in the highest state of cultivation, in iron for their ploughs, in timber for repairing their houses; while the fine which they paid was merely nominal, and amounted only to a penny, commonly called "God's Penny." Their children also went to school in the abbey, where they received their dinner and supper in the hall, and where they obtained the preference above other candidates to be received as a monk, or a nun, if they displayed abilities.* Besides these reasons for the unpopularity of the measures which were

* *West's Antiquities of Furness*, p. 126.

now adopted, the dread of innovation on religious matters is so great in the minds of the ignorant, that the hand of improvement is at first regarded by them as the instrument of sacrilege. These considerations were aggravated by the inconvenience attendant on the sudden dispersion of a large body of idle and helpless individuals, few of whom were adequately portioned by the bounty of the king, and of whom many had to seek the means of support in a world to which they were almost strangers.*

The year 1525, which witnessed the first serious blow to the monastic orders in England, was marked by the foundation of the cardinal's college at Oxford. Before we enter upon a description of this magnificent institution it is, however, only just that we should survey the other meritorious endowments of the same kind, in various periods of this reign.

There is reason to suppose that the exertions of Wolsey in favour of Oxford, were not only naturally directed thither on account of his early obligations to it as a place of education, but

* The obloquy, or the glory, whichsoever it may be considered, of appropriating the revenues of dissolved monasteries to colleges, is not due to Wolsey as the first prelate who adopted this expedient. Besides Wainfleet, Bishop of Winchester and chancellor to Henry the Sixth, founder of Magdalen College, Oxford, in 1473, and Chichele, Archbishop of Canterbury, founder of All-Souls College, Oxford, in 1437, at

that the more flourishing condition of Cambridge rendered such beneficence to the sister university doubly essential, in order to equalize these renowned rivals; for although the halls, or hostles, in Oxford, exceeded in number those of Cambridge, yet a succession of benefactors, during the preceding century, had enriched the latter with magnificent endowments and donations. The most conspicuous among these was King's College, founded out of two small hostles by Henry the Sixth, and ennobled by a chapel, the exquisite fabrication of which has excited the admiration and wonder of all its beholders, from the period in which it was achieved to the present day. "It is," as Fuller remarks, "one of the rarest fabrickes in Christendom, wherein the stone work, wood work, and glass work contend, which most deserve admiration. Yet the first generally carrieth away the credit, (as being a *Stonehenge* indeed,) so geometrically contrived, that voluminous stones mutually support themselves in the arched roof, as if Art had

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the dissolution of the alien priories, made ample use of the disbursed treasures for he same purposes: Fisher, Bishop of Rochester, the great patron of Cambridge, in 1521, bestowed the riches of Bromhall abbey, and that of Heigham in Kent, on Saint John's College, in which he was authorized by the example of Henry the Seventh, who applied the lands of the nunnery of Saint Radegund to the endowment of Jesus College, Cambridge.

made them forget Nature, and weaned themselves from their fondness to descend to their centre.* No wonder then this chapel was the work of three succeeding kings; Henry the Sixth who founded it, the Seventh who fathered, the Eighth who finished it."†

This edifice had been begun by Henry the Sixth, who intended to have built the college upon the same magnificent design, of which his death prevented the completion. In the contests between the houses of York and Lancaster, all that could benefit learning, or humanize society was forgotten, and the chapel proceeded slowly until the happier æra which the accession of Henry the Eighth seemed to promise; it was then completed, bearing on many of its highly-finished compartments, the united roses, emblems of peace and prosperity.

* From this passage of Fuller has probably originated an anecdote, not too well authenticated, of Sir Christopher Wren, who is said, upon an examination of this admirable structure, to have declared, that if he could have discovered the first stone of the building, he could have erected a similar fabric. See *Walpole's Miscellaneous Antiquities.* It is more likely, as Dyer in his History of Cambridge remarks, that each partition of the edifice was a distinct undertaking, completed independently of its neighbour, to which it was afterward united and fitted. *Dyer's Hist. of Camb.* vol. ii. p. 183.

† Fuller might have said of five kings, since even in the troublous days of Edward the Fourth and of Richard the Third, the building proceeded, though but slowly.

To the queens of England, the university had also been much indebted. Margaret, wife of the unfortunate King Henry the Sixth, was the foundress of Queen's College; and Elizabeth, consort of Edward the Fourth, the author of its completion in 1448. To these institutions must be added that of Saint Katherine's Hall, by Richard Woodlark, Provost of King's College, in 1475; of Jesus College, by Alcock, Bishop of Ely, 1443, from the revenues of Saint Radegund's nunnery; of Christ's College, by Margaret, Countess of Richmond, in 1505, and of Saint John's, by the same illustrious and public-spirited lady, begun in 1509, and finished by her executors. This college was so much crowded with students, that soon after its completion it was difficult for them to obtain a private study. But to the disgrace of her grandson, Henry the Eighth, who with all his real anxiety to promote the interests of learning, could not resist his own peculiar profits, the college of St. John's was deprived, early in his reign, of four hundred pounds per annum, by informers, who, questioning the title, appropriated that sum to the king.

In this reign the endowment of Buckingham College was commenced by the unfortunate Edward Stafford, Duke of Buckingham, who, having some years before been entertained there, while it bore the name of Monk's College, began

to build, and to enlarge it, from gratitude. His bounty was cut short by his tragical death in 1521, but his labours, in the cause of learning were completed by Thomas Audley, lord chancellor of England, who afterwards founded Magdalen College on the same spot. These institutions were enriched by a valuable collection of books, added to the library of the university, from Chelsea College, to the fruitless endowment of which it had been originally bequeathed by three archbishops. To this advantage were united, during eight years, the presence and instructions of the learned Erasmus, who was Greek Professor at Cambridge in 1504. The residence of this celebrated scholar in the university was probably occasioned by the invitation of Fisher, Bishop of Rochester, whose high reputation furnished a strong motive to persons of eminence to assemble here. At Queen's College, where Erasmus fixed his abode, there is an apartment, according to Fuller, in the south-west tower of the old court, which is still honoured with the name of Erasmus's study; and it may amuse a modern student to reflect, that his reason for selecting so inconvenient a station, was, that by the ascent of so many stairs, he might exercise his body, and prevent corpulency. But Cambridge was not a favourite residence with Erasmus; and besides the un-

healthiness of the adjacent country, he had another objection completely in character with a collegian, as the ale, which was then the common beverage of all colleges, was, in his opinion, "raw, small, and windy," qualities which it retained so late as the time of Fuller.* Erasmus, to whom our universities are indebted for much of the classical fame which they have since maintained, defines the respective merits of each, at this period, in the following passage: "John Fisher, Bishop of Rochester, told me some years since, that in Cambridge, whereof he is perpetual chancellor, instead of sophisticall querks, now sober and sound disputations are agitated amongst divines, whence men depart, not only learneder, but better." Elsewhere—"By the wisdom of Thomas, Cardinal of York, the school of Oxford shall be adorned not only with all kinds of tongues and of learning, but also with such manners as become their best studies. For the university of Cambridge doth flourish long agoe with all ornaments."†

Yet this superiority appears not to have continued long, for, in 1545, so great a decay of students prevailed, that none but those in office continued to reside at the almost deserted

* *Fuller's Hist. Camb.* p. 87.

† See *Fuller, Hist. University Camb.*

university of Cambridge, This depressing state of affairs was piteously described by the scholars in a letter to Henry the Eighth, to whom they represented that the fall of abbeys had excited a general fear of the annihilation of learning. To give a new stimulus, therefore, to this languishing seminary, Henry, seizing the revenues of three old monasteries, afterwards founded Trinity College, and endowed it with great liberality; an example which even the bigoted Queen Mary did not disdain to follow; for being persuaded by her clergy that it would be impossible to prevail on the Pope to allow public prayers for her father's soul, as a substitute for masses, she enriched his college by an annual donation exceeding three hundred pounds. *

Notwithstanding these benefactions to the university of Cambridge, many of the students there experienced privations which are usually thought favourable to mental energy: "There be divers," said the master of St. John's College, in a sermon preached in the year 1550, at St. Paul's Cross, which "ryse dayly betwixe foure and fyve of the clocke in the mornynge, and from fyve till syxe of the clocke use common prayre, wyth an exhortacion of God's worde, in a common chapell; and from syx until ten of the clocke use ever, eyther pri-

* *Fuller*, p. 122.

vate studies or common lectures. At ten of the clocke they go to dinner; whereas they be contente with a penny piece of biefe amongst four, havynge a few potage made of the brothe of the same beefe, wyth salt and otemele, and nothynge elles. After this slender dinner they be ether teachynge or learnynge untyll five of the clocke of the evenynge, when as they have a supper not much better than the dinner. Immedyatelye after the whyche they goo ether to reasonynges in problemes, or unto summe other studye, untyll it be nine or tenne of the clock, and then beinge without fyre, are feyne to walke or run up and downe haulfe an houre, to get a heate on their feyte, when they go to bed." *

To this account are added the piteous complaints of Erasmus, who, although Greek professor at Cambridge for the period of seven years, was frequently necessitated to importune Doctor Colet for the sum of fifteen angels, which that divine had promised on the dedication of Erasmus's book, *De Copia Verborum*, but which had not been paid. In his letters to Colet, Erasmus complains that the "academics of Cambridge were all as poor as himself; and that thirty nobles constituted all his reward for explaining the grammars of Chrysoloras and of Gaza." †

* See *Wordsworth's Eccl. Biog.*

† *Jortin's Erasmus.*

In Oxford, during the first years of Henry's reign, affairs were even more calamitous than at the sister university. The endowments had neither been so numerous nor so liberal as those of Cambridge, during the preceding century. In 1427 a charter had been obtained for the erection of Lincoln College, by Richard Flemming, Bishop of Lincoln, but the building was not finished until after the death of that prelate, and was indebted for its completion to the benefactions of several individuals. The foundations of All Souls College and of Saint Mary Magdalen, by Chichele and Waynfleet, have been already mentioned; but these munificent institutions were rapidly declining in the reign of Henry the Seventh, when the condition of Oxford, both as to learning, character, and wealth, was at its lowest ebb. The Greek language was almost forgotten among the students and professors; the town of Oxford was decayed in its buildings for want of a well replenished academy; the streets were desolate, except when disturbed by the contentions between townsmen and gownsmen, or enlivened by the more classical, but not less vehement disputes between the monks of the Cistercian and those of the Benedictine order.* The Mendicant friars, formerly the oracles of learning and philosophy,

* *Wood's Hist. Oxford*, vol. ii. pt. 1. p. 1.

were now regarded by the students with contempt, for omitting their rule, or for becoming the enemies of improvement; "the schools," says Wood, "were filled with querks and sophistry, and the most eminent scholars were inclined to Wicklevism, and dared not express their sentiments." Other disasters ensued, from the negligence or dishonesty of some of the professors of the degraded university; the statutes were confused, or had become obsolete; the prime records were lost; even the treasures were stolen from the chests, and those bequeathed by Chichele had vanished from their place of deposit, borrowed, according to the accounts of the keepers, but never returned. *

Such was the state of affairs at Oxford at the accession of Henry the Eighth, when, however, a more favourable era seemed approaching. Early in this reign the College of Brasen-
1513. nose was finished, out of the ruins of several hostles, by Smith, Bishop of Litchfield and Coventry, first president of the Marshes in Wales, (an office framed by Henry the Eighth,) and the founder of an hospital and free-school in the town of Litchfield. As Smith was afterwards promoted to the see of Lincoln, the university of Oxford chose him for their chancellor, as they belonged to his diocese.† In

* *Wood.* vol. i. p. 666.

† *Fuller's Worthies,* vol. i. p. 552.

this situation [the bishop, on discovering the lamentable state of the university, began to exercise his office with proper vigilance, and appointed Dr. Young, titular Bishop of Calipoli, to examine the archives, and to call the treasurers to account. The exertions of Smith were seconded by those of Fox, the experienced adviser and the godfather of Henry the Eighth, who was educated at Pembroke Hall, in Cambridge*, of which he was president†; yet he deemed it essential to lend his aid to restore the decayed prosperity of Oxford.

The foundation of Corpus Christi College, by Fox, affords an instance of the enlarged views which began to open before the minds, even of the most zealous and orthodox adherents of the popish church. The intention of the bishop extended at first merely to the institution of a college for a warden, and for a certain number of secular scholars and monks, to serve as a nursery of learning for the priory of Saint Swithin in Winchester, as it was then customary for every monastery of consequence to have some particular college under its patronage, to which the novices were transferred at a proper age.

*. *Godwin's Catalogue of Bishops*, p. 246.

† Here his name was perpetuated in hangings which he presented to that college, and on which was wrought a fox.

Fortunately for posterity, the intimate friend of Fox was Hugh Oldham, Bishop of Exeter, a liberal benefactor to Brasen-nose College, and afterwards to Corpus Christi; a man, says Fuller, "most pious according to, and above the age he lived in;" but who was excommunicated by the Pope for not submitting to a pontifical decision in a dispute which he had with the abbot of Taverstock.*

The buildings for the new seminary were already in progress, when Oldham undertook to dissuade Fox from prosecuting this design: "What! my lord," said he, "shall we build houses and provide livelihoods for a company of monks, whose end and fall we ourselves may live to see? No, no; it is more meet a great deal that we should have care to provide for the increase of learning, and for such as by their learning shall do good to the church and commonwealth." These arguments had their due weight, and not only was a new college founded upon a liberal scale, but an increase of reputation given to it by the appointment of two lectures of Greek and Latin, and by the assistance and countenance of the most eminent men

* Oldham died in a state of excommunication, and could not be buried in his own cathedral, adjoining to which he had erected a chapel. He was therefore deposited in the wall of the edifice. *Fuller's Worthies*, vol. ii. p. 341.

of the time. Among these, Ludovicus Vives, Nicholas Crucher, the mathematician, Clement Edwards and Nicholas Utten, professors of Greek, Thomas Jupset, and Richard Pace, were the bright luminaries who presided over this college. With a degree of liberality, hitherto unprecedented in the universities, the Latin lecture was not confined to that college in particular where it was founded, but was open to the students generally. The Greek classics were included in the course of instruction, and an admirable selection formed for the use of the Greek lecturer by the excellent founder; but such were the prejudices of the age, that he was obliged to adduce the authorities of the canons, in order to countenance this novelty. This, however, did not prevent contention; and had not the influence of Erasmus, who had now changed his residence from Cambridge to Saint Mary's College, Oxford, abated the warmth of the disputants, the learning of the schools would probably have obtained a preference.*

The prosperity of Oxford seemed at this time to be reviving. In 1518, the university was favoured with a visit from Queen Katharine, who besides her pious desire of kneeling at the shrine of the virgin Saint Frideswide, to whom a monastery in Oxford was dedicated, had a respect for

* *Chalmers' Hist. Univers. Oxford,* vol. ii. p. 272.

the learned, and a desire to behold the seat of knowledge and of science. Katharine, whom Erasmus was wont to call the "best of women," had offered to become the pupil of that great man in Latin, and had received from him a compliment in the dedication of that work of Erasmus on "Christian Matrimony*," of which his pupil Lord Mountjoy declared, that "it made him resolve to be a married man." The queen was, therefore, not merely an idle or incurious visitor of that seminary of learning, the value of which she well understood: it is probable also that she wished to give dignity, by her visit, to the degraded state of Oxford. The king, who was on his progress, came with the queen as far as Abingdon, whence she proceeded with Wolsey to Oxford. Here she took a survey of the university, and after paying her respects to the virgin, "vouchsafed so low," in the opinion of Wood, as to dine with the Mertonians, although expected by some of the other colleges to take her repast in their halls. This honour to Merton was thought to result from the favour which she bore to one Gravelyns, who had been warden, and who was now almoner to the king.

After the departure of Katharine, the Cardinal went to the convocation house, where after some ceremonies between him and several of the

* *Knight's Life of Erasmus*, p. 252.

nobility who were with him, and the heads of the colleges, he made an oration, in which he declared it to be his intention to establish several lectures in the university, and to intercede with the king to grant fresh privileges to Oxford. The university then delivered all their concerns, their charters and liberties, into the hands of the Cardinal.* Wolsey did not forget his promise; but two years previously to the fulfilment of his designs with regard to Oxford, he founded a school at his native town, at Ipswich, towards which twenty-four suppressed monasteries were afterwards granted to him. This institution was suggested by the endowment of St. Paul's school, of which Wolsey borrowed the regulations. For awhile this monument of his respect and attachment to his birth-place, which had on one of its portals the insignia of a butcher's trade, rivalled the great seminaries of Windsor and of Eton†; but its prosperity only lasted with that of its founder, and faded, with his decline.

The Cardinal's College, founded by Wolsey, and erected on the site of the monastery of St. Frideswide, suppressed by authority from Rome, in 1527, was originally intended to be designated the "College of Secular Priests," but the appel-

* *Wood's Hist. University of Oxford*, vol. ii. part i. p. 15.

† *Warton.*

lation was afterwards changed, and the clergy resident in it were denominated "the deans and canons secular of the Cardinal of York," and were appointed to subsist by perpetual succession.* These canons were sixty in number of the first, and forty of the second order, besides a dean; and were selected by Wolsey with care and judgment, and none but men of reputation and of learning were nominated to the office. It is singular, that among the latter appointments of the Cardinal, the names of Tyndall and of Frith are to be found, together with that of Taverner, the organist of the chapel, an accomplished musician, who afterwards became a protestant, and repented bitterly that he had set popish ditties to music. These were men who subsequently rendered themselves obnoxious to the Romanists, and who at this time were suspected of heresy. But it was the judicious endeavour of the Cardinal to assemble a body of men who could vie with the Lutheran party in ability; and, for this purpose, he invited Cranmer and Parker, both afterwards raised to the archbishoprick of Canterbury, to share the honours of his college: they refused however to comply with this request.

The institution, which casts so bright a lustre on Wolsey's days of power, was not suffered to

* *Herbert.*

continue when the favourite had lost his influence; and, although, amidst all the troubles of his harassed mind, Wolsey ever retained so much affection for his infant college, as to entreat Henry to allow its continuance, yet, it was almost totally deserted and destroyed, until Henry resolved to re-found it in his own name. With this view a new patent was drawn out, and in 1532 it again assumed its character as a college, under the title of King Henry the Eighth's College in Oxford. In 1545 the episcopal see having been translated to the King's College from Oseney Abbey, a magnificent pile of building, which was annihilated by the order of Henry, probably on account of its riches, the college received the new appellation of Christ Church; and a bishop and archdeacon, removed from the cathedral of Lincoln, were appointed, with a dean and eight canons.*

While the Cardinal was conferring one of the greatest possible obligations on society, he incurred a degree of ridicule and of odium which had not been cast upon him in less meritorious undertakings. The people could endure his "pleasant vices;" they could even approve his maskings, his banquets, the scenes of riot and debauchery which were said to have disgraced his mansion, for these were popular

* *Chalmers' Hist. University Oxford*, vol. ii. p. 303.

sins; but, when he chastised the corruptions of St. Frideswide's monastery by its destruction, and founded upon its fall an institution friendly alike to the interests of learning and of religion, he was insultingly reminded of his origin, and hailed with prophesies of his ruin. Fuller relates that on the window of the new college some malicious person depicted a dog knawing the blade-bone of a shoulder of mutton; and as the kitchen was finished before the rest of the building, one of the Cardinal's satirists exclaimed, "Egregium opus! Cardinalis iste instituit collegium et absolvit popinam."* Various other inscriptions were placed on the walls, among the rest the following:—

"Non stabit illa domus, aliis fundata rapinis,
"Aut ruet, aut alter raptor habebit eam."†

The buildings of Cardinal's College were projected by Wolsey on a scale of magnificence and of elegance consonant to the other great works of which he had the direction; and had the plan which he formed been continued, it would probably have been one of the most splendid establishments of the kind in Europe. With respect to the

* Excellent work! the Cardinal has begun the college and finished the kitchen.

† This house, founded by pillaging from others, will not stand; but will either fall into ruins, or another robber will possess it.

church, which belonged anciently to Saint Frideswide, and the origin is doubtfully assigned to the time of Henry the First, the steeple, and the fine roof over the choir, and various alterations, are ascribed to the Cardinal; but the west end of the church, and the west side of the cloister, were destroyed by Wolsey to make room for the foundation of the college. The first stone was laid March 20th, 1525, by Wolsey, and a sumptuous entertainment succeeded a Latin sermon delivered by Longland, Bishop of Lincoln. The material for the buildings was supplied by quarries in the vicinity of Oxford, and hundreds of workmen, and of artists, were employed in building, and in painting on glass. The expences of one year amounted to nearly eight thousand pounds, a sum in those days deemed very considerable. But Wolsey had incautiously omitted one essential point, that of obtaining a legal endowment to this college. The kitchen, the hall, and the greater part of the quadrangle * were not completed when the operations of the workmen were interrupted by command of the king: the tower over the gateway was commenced in the time of Wolsey, but was not finished until 1681, when it was completed by Sir Christopher Wren. In the

* In this quadrangle a pulpit was long preserved from which Wickliffe delivered his doctrines. *Chalmers.*

campanile of this tower was placed the huge bell called the Great Tom, which was brought from the ancient tower of Oseney Abbey.*

Notwithstanding the liberality of various benefactors to the universities, Cambridge, as we have seen, was, in the latter part of this reign, in a languishing condition; and at Oxford, the students must have had many hardships and much poverty to contend with, since Oxford fare was, on the authority of Sir Thomas More, proverbial for its scantiness and its uncertainty. In addressing his family upon their change of fortune, the jocose philosopher speaks of descending from "Lincoln's Inn diet, to New Inn diet, and thence to Oxford fare;" which, if their means should not enable them to support, they must, like "poore scholers of Oxforde, goe a begging, with our bags and wallets, and sing *salve regina* at rich men's doors."

But, had Wolsey continued at the head of affairs, poverty would not long have been proverbial in his beloved university. In order, in some degree, to improve the state of the famished students, he refused to let the farms belonging to his colleges to any persons except to those who chose to dwell in them, and to maintain hospitality, highly necessary in the vicinity of so numerous

* The bells of Oseney were celebrated for their power and harmony.

an assemblage of hungry persons. The greater works which Wolsey might have projected and fulfilled, were frustrated by his death; his reputation received, however, a considerable addition from those which he was permitted to accomplish.

"As for politer learning," said Erasmus, in speaking of the Cardinal, "as yet struggling with the patrons of the ancient ignorance, he upheld it by his favour, and defended it by his authority, and adorned it by his splendour, and cherished it by his kindness. He invited all the most learned professors by his noble salaries. In furnishing libraries with all kinds of authors of good learning, he contended even with Ptolomeus Philadelphus himself, who was more famous for this, than for his kingdom. He recalled the three learned languages, without which, as he said, all learning was lame." To this opinion Erasmus almost prophetically added, "that the learning of future ages would hereafter speak aloud of this new happiness imparted to the world by Wolsey."*

* *Strype*, vol. i. p. 193.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.


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